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P H E D O R A.



IN FOUR VOLUMES.





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P H E D O R A;

OR,

The Forest of Ginski.

A NOVEL.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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BY

MARY CHARLTON.

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" To build, to plant, whatever you intend,  
" To rear the column, or the arch to bend;  
" To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot;  
" In all, let Nature never be forgot.  
" But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,  
" Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare."

POPE.

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# PHEDORA.

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## CHAP. I.

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“I'll join my grief to your's, and mourn the evils that have hurt your peace, and quench'd your eyes in tears.”

THE next morning again brought the Baron and Cassimir to the house of Lumerski: but Mr. Leuhaupt and Alexy were not visible; for the good minister, well pleased with the task Phedora had innocently assigned him, had already begun a course of instructions with his little pupil, whose exclusive attention was not to be gained whilst the fair Rubenski or his new favourite Catherine were in the room with him.

Lumerski rejoiced at a circumstance so favourable to the designs of Rectzizi; and relying on the extreme good-humour of the Baron, led him away with very little ceremony, to facilitate the opportunity Cassimir sought for, conversing with Phedora, who saw him enter the apartment with a smile of satisfaction, and secretly acknowledged that he was now again the Rectzizi of Livonia. Catherine partook of the pleasure it was evident her friends mutually felt, and would have left them to the reciprocal explanation she wished to forward, but that she was half conscious the disapprobation of her father would attend a discovery, of what would then so plainly appear to have been a planned measure to favour the passion of Rectzizi.

She remained therefore in the room; but Cassimir was too well acquainted with her sentiments, to be prevented by her presence from endeavouring to ensure his happiness: he rather hoped it would be a considerable advantage to his suit, and his eyes sparkled on

on beholding Phedora thus at liberty to listen to him, a circumstance he feared Mr. Leuhaupt would have rendered almost impossible. Not to lose a moment so desirable, he instantly addressed her in terms unequivocally expressive of his affection.

Phedora in the utmost confusion, blushed deeply, and turning to Catherine, saw in her countenance a playful affectation of demurness, that convinced her she would not fail to become an accessory in the treason Rectzizi was on the point of committing against the presumptive judgment of Mr. Leuhaupt, and the more declared disapprobation of the Count and Countess.

Cassimir continued speaking, but she scarcely dared to attend to what he said, until he required her forgiveness for his conduct at Moscow, which he endeavoured to excuse, at the same time that he acknowledged it was too atrocious to be pardoned but by an

effort of that uncommon sweetness of disposition she possessed.

"Mention it no more," cried Phedora eagerly, "I have almost forgotten that cruel lapse of kindness—at least I have tried to persuade myself that it was another Rectzizi I beheld then, and not the generous, good, and amiable being I knew in Livonia."

"And which Rectzizi will you acknowledge now?" asked Cassimir, with some anxiety.

"A mixture of both," cried Catherine, laughing, "with a preponderancy of the Muscovite."

"No, no!" interrupted Phedora, half angry at this pretended interpretation of her sentiments; "I think you are now what the brother of Ulmeri should be—gentle and benevolent; and I hope I shall never more see you in your Russian disguise."

Rectzizi very readily affirmed that she should not:—"And now, dear Phedora," continued

continued he, "I must in my turn require from you a promise, which our good and amiable Catherine will I am sure, join in entreating you to make in my favour."

"What can you request of me," replied she, "consistently with the respectful acquiescence I owe to the will of the Count and your mother, that I would not gratefully accord to one who was almost my earliest benefactor?"

This reference to the disapprobation of his parents, displeased Cassimir:—"What is their will?" exclaimed he impatiently: "is it their will to behold their son irrevocably miserable? for so the success of their machinations at Moscow would have made me."

"Machinations!" repeated Phedora with an air of surprise and reproach.

"Yes," returned he: "the Countess condescended to deceive me; and when I saw you, dear unconscious Phedora, at the house of the Baroness, I had been taught to believe



that I was resigning into her hands your marriage portion with Ivan Leuhaupt."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed she.

"Could you think then," resumed Casimir, "that unless I had been governed by such an idea, I could have retained any resentment in my bosom when I beheld you—Do you think I could otherwise have quitted you in anger?"

"Indeed I know not," replied Phedora blushing; "but I am certain the Countess must have been herself mistaken; for she is too just to accomplish any measure by deception of the lightest kind. But had you at that interview deigned to inform me that I had incurred your displeasure, what motive for anger and resentment could you reasonably have advanced against me?"

"I will tell you, lovely Phedora," cried he, taking her hand; "I might very reasonably, as Mrs. Lumeriski will allow, be extremely displeased with you, for so contemptuously disregarding the adjurations I  
sent



sent to you by Ulmeri, on that fatal day when you were removed from my sight : and I might too with still more reason be supposed to feel resentment, when I imagined that you so highly distinguished another, to the total annihilation of every hope I had presumed to form."

Phedora now wished to speak, but he continued with a rapidity that prevented her intention.

" Now that we have adjusted this point, let me recur to my request ; and Catherine, whom we both so much love, shall at once be my advocate and your counsellor. You cannot imagine, dearest Phedora, that she experiences the less affection for you, because her friendly heart is interested in my happiness ?"

" What would you ask," interrupted Phedora, " that requires such a preface : believe me, if your request is such as Mr. Leuhaupt will permit me to grant, you will not want

the influence of our gentle friend ; but if he refuses to sanction with his approbation the covenant you are introducing with so much caution to me, Catherine must herself wish to give up your cause."

Reetzizi looked disappointed, and Mrs. Lumeriski was silent.

" For the present," returned he, after a short pause, " I should wish our revered friend to be ignorant of the engagements I hope to induce you to enter into."

" Then I am certain," cried Phedora hastily, " they are of a nature my own heart would disapprove, if you have the least reluctance to submit them to his scrutiny."

" Hear me," exclaimed Reetzizi, with some impatience—" listen to me at least before you condemn me to disappointment.— Yet first tell me, loveliest Phedora," added he in a softer tone, " must I discard as illusive, those hopes with which my kind friends have flattered me ? Does there exist within  
your

your knowledge, a man you would prefer to your devoted Rectzizi?"

"Certainly such an one does exist," cried Mrs. Lumerski, who was good-humouredly provoked at the silence of the trembling Phedora. Cassimir started.

"You surely forget," continued Catherine, "the contract which binds this demure looking deserter, to the engaging Captain Matheowitz: Lumerski informed you of the circumstance; it cannot so soon have escaped your memory."

"Indeed," replied Rectzizi half smiling, "I had not the least recollection of it: but suffer your charming friend to end the suspense I feel at this moment, and persuade her to give it the termination I so ardently wish."

"My dear Phedora," said Catherine more gravely, "you will not refuse to reply with sincerity to the question of Captain Rectzizi?"

“Why do you urge me,” returned she in great distress, “to acknowledge what ought not to pass my lips! Ah Catherine, I must leave you—Mr. Leuhaupt was right; I must fly to the Baroness.”

“No!” exclaimed Cassimir with a look of animation; “if you will fly from hence, it shall be to me: Lumerski will engage a Lutheran minister—he will give you to me, and Catherine, our dear indulgent Catherine, will witness the ceremony that makes you mine.”

“What have you said!” cried Phedora, with a look of horror; “can you think I have lost all recollection of past events? Can you indeed suppose that I have forgotten by whose bounty I was relieved in childhood from abject want, and the more insupportable misery of seeing a helpless parent sinking to the grave, neglected, forlorn and desolate—recall her to your memory, Catherine, as you have often beheld her—meekly bending beneath the taunts of the wealthy, for such the poor Stenaus were then—retiring  
ing

ing to weep in foundless sorrow the injury she attempted not to repel ; bowing with acquiescence before the claims of pride, herself too proud to act amiss. Think of her Catherine, raising her hands to Heaven to call down blessings upon her benefactors, praying that every just wish they formed might then be heard, and charging her orphan Phedora never to forget the reverence their virtues should inspire. Oh what would be her detestation of my ungrateful presumption, could she be conscious of this scene, and see me yield with hardened vice of character, to a proposition, that not to reject would render me an outcast from the society of the good, and extend the wide-spreading odium to the being I most revere ! Oh no ! I will do this little justice to the precepts of the worthy Mr. Leuhaupt—I will not, at least, in return for the benefits I still rejoice in, direct a war of jarring passions to those bosoms which felt for my distress, that tender pity so sacred in the eye of Heaven, that it veils every frailty from the

glance of the enquiring angel ! You weep, dear Catherine—let me dry up your tears ; but never, never again let your eye be moistened with remorse, for having counselled your friend to become unworthy of that title !”

Mrs. Lumerski threw herself into the arms of Phedora, and their mingled tears flowed down her cheek : whilst Rectzizi walked to and fro with a disordered pace, unable to express the agitations of his soul. Suddenly however he turned towards them, and had begun a passionate exordium, when Mr. Leuhaupt entered the room, leading in Alexy.

The good man started on observing the too evident emotion of his daughter and her friend ; and gazing at the aspect of Rectzizi, which proclaimed the discomposure of his mind, “ I perceive,” said he gravely, “ that my presence has an unpleasing effect on each of the party whose conversation



versation it interrupts. The subject was an animated one, if I may judge from the vehemence of tone and gesture used by Captain Rectzizi."

"For myself I can answer, that it was most interesting," exclaimed Cassimir: "ah my dear Sir, by what expressions could I indeed paint the force of that admiration which our beloved, our angelic Phedora inspires me with! Oh you, who possess an extensive influence over the mind of my father, represent to him with that energy an excellence like hers must ever create, that I live only in the hope of making her mine, and that he takes back the life he gave me, if he refuses to confirm my wishes by his generous assent to them."

"My good friend," replied Mr. Leuhaupt, "calm yourself; and then review, with an unimpassioned judgment, the embassy you have so inconsiderately charged me with. Reflect for a moment upon the strong gradation of rank between the Count Rectzizi and myself—it is true, that from  
the

the friendship with which he honours me, he appears to overlook the vast disparity : but this friendship is founded, I am convinced, upon the invariable integrity of principle and conduct it has been the pride of my life to maintain, from the hour I was taught by reason and religion, that virtue was the noblest ornament of man, and the most distinguished inmate he could admit into his bosom. If then I suffer my actions to wear a dubious or suspicious appearance in the eyes of the Count, will not his confidence in me be shaken, and the influence you say I possess over his mind, be equally diminished. It was I who first interested your parents for the fate of Phedora Rubenski : it was under my roof she received the benefits of the application I made to their well-known benevolence : it was under my roof too, that you received the impresson I could wish you to obliterate from your heart. I regard this dear girl as my child, I love her as such, and would promote her happiness with as much effort as though I were really

really



really her father, whilst I behold her actuated by those virtuous, modest, and delicate sentiments of scrupulous and timid honor which so well become her sex ; but she, like myself, is destitute of all worldly possessions, and we have both alike eaten our bread from the same generous and beneficent hand.—

How then could I with unblushing cheeks, and a confidence of opinion, such as a voluntary adviser should exhibit, desire the Count to overcome the objections he may have justly formed, and hazard the resentment of the various branches of his noble family, to gratify the weakness of a young man who considers himself alone in the petition he so vehemently urges. No, Captain Rectzizi, I could not do this : on the contrary, my conscience prompts me to remind Phedora, that the line which virtue marks out to us is not always the most alluring or easy to follow : to remind her likewise, that she may now repay in part the debt she owes to the Count and Countess, by steadily refusing her concurrence

concurrence to a measure she is sensible they highly disapprove."

As he concluded, he regarded Phedora with an air that marked the reprehension he meant his words to convey to her, and she felt the censure, though she had not merited it.

Catherine was still more affected; "Ah my father!" exclaimed she; "however meekly our dear Rubenski receives your reproof, with whatever appearance of yielding deference to your precepts, believe me she was predetermined to be guided by them, nor had her judgment misled her in imagining what yours would be. I confess I have not acted with such propriety; but Phedora recalled me to a sense of right, before your entrance by giving me the confusion of guilt, convinced me how much I erred."

Mr. Leuhaupt, on hearing this exculpation, extended his arms to Phedora, who flew to him with alacrity.

“ I can now never regret,” said the good man, as he embraced her tenderly, “ all the anxious cares which in our separation, have torn my heart for my little Rubenski: you efface the recollection of them, my amiable child, and fill my bosom with the most pleasing emotions. As you cherish virtue, so will the Almighty cherish you—and one of the first of virtues, my good and gentle Phedora, is an animated and lasting sensation of gratitude for benefits received: not a poor tribute of words, but a silent thankfulness of soul, that would cheerfully strip itself of its dearest gratification, to render back any portion of the benevolent kindness, which in misery soothes distress, leads back the sickening imagination to images of comfort, and turns a renovating tide of pleasure into the heart sunk and withered by misfortune.— May you, my children, if chance conducts you to prosperity, become the benefactors of your more unfortunate fellow-creatures— if poverty oppresses you, may you ever de-  
serve

serve the commiseration of such beings as the Count and Countess Rectzizi !”

Cassimir, extremely agitated, now left the room, and in a few minutes quitted the house, to which Lumerski and Baron Hartsen almost immediately returned, but without meeting their disappointed friend. The instant they entered the apartment where Mr. Leuhaupt still remained with his daughter and Phedora, Alexy ran to the Baron with a joyful mien, inviting him to play, and the challenge was immediately accepted. Lumerski, not being so much occupied, had leisure to perceive that some explanation had passed between his father-in-law and his fair companions ; and he distinguished in the countenance of Catherine some still existing symptoms of the confusion which had attended her confession to her father : the features of Mr. Leuhaupt were however, more than usually complacent, and after a few useless conjectures, he very naturally fell into the conversation that ensued.

The

The Baron soon after withdrew, having declined, though unwillingly, the invitation Lumeriski gave him of again sharing his domestic meal, because he wished personally to enforce the execution of those orders he had given for the accommodation of his wife, who had formerly complained, and not without reason, of his negligence on this point.— He had taken for the Baroness a house at Warsaw, where he expected to be stationed some time, a circumstance that much pleased Lumeriski, whose regiment formed a part of the division the Baron commanded.

Phedora now found herself so much recovered, that she entreated Mr. Leubaupt to take off the interdiction he had laid upon any recurrence to past events, and allow her to make some enquiries of Catherine, when business called him and Lumeriski away.— The good man easily imagined that the information Phedora desired, related to his wife, and sighing at the recollection of her sufferings, did not refuse his consent to the demand

mand her tender affection had extorted from her.

Mrs. Lumerski was eagerly reminded of this permission the first moment she was alone with her friend.

“ Ah ! Phedora,” sighed she, “ what would you hear ! I can too well guess where your enquiries will tend : believe me, you can only receive pain from the melancholy narrative I have to relate.”

“ You guess then, dear Catherine,” said Phedora, “ that I would importune you for an account of your journey to Casan, and all that happened there. I know that I impose a sad task upon you ; but you will, I am sure, undertake it the less unwillingly, because you must mingle in the relation, that incense of praise due to the virtues of the dear deceased. Oh how sweet must such a tribute be from the lips of a child to a departed parent, if the soul, which no earth can cover, no mortal chains can longer bind, be indeed  
sensible



sensible to sounds, which the same soul in its transient fetters so tenderly loved !”

Catherine wept :—“ I have indeed,” cried she, “ a fond eulogium to make, such as my dear Rubenski expects to hear—but let me not anticipate my mournful tale. On the day we were to have met on board the vessel, the worthy Rectzizi accompanied us to the river side, and detained a boat for our use ; but we had not been in it five minutes when that wretch, Colonel Rimbach, appeared in another : he hailed us, and notwithstanding our eagerness to avoid him, discovered that our Phedora was not with us. The extreme anxiety of poor Rectzizi made him instantly order the boat to put back, a measure which he alone had influence enough to enforce, and we reached the shore almost as soon as the hateful Colonel. Casimir leaped from the boat ere my father could speak to him, and hastily followed the steps of Rimbach, whom he attained at the moment one of his emissaries approached him, with a joyful intimation that he had discovered  
you :

you : and at the same instant Mr. Stenau accosted the agitated Rectzizi, who supposing he had something of importance to relate concerning the fair object of his inquietude, stopt a few seconds to attend to him : but when he found that poor Ulric was only intent on the speediest method of embarking himself and his goods, he interrupted him with a hasty demand of where he had left his charge, the lovely Phedora.

“ She is within ten paces of us,” replied Ulric, “ by the side of my wife.”

“ Where, where ?” exclaimed Rectzizi, “ why did you leave her ?”

He had now lost sight of Rimbach, whom the intervening croud hid from him : but screams of distress drew him irresistably to the spot from whence they issued, and there again he beheld Rimbach speaking to Mrs. Stenau in a threatening tone, and his eyes searched in vain for Phedora : overpowered by anxiety for your safety, he now lost the forbearance



forbearance my father had so earnestly recommended to him, and demanded you of your persecutor in vehement accents of reproach. The unworthy Colonel replied with all the rage and asperity that animated him on missing his prey, and Rectzizi, still in terms of reprobation requiring you at his hands, the wretch unsheathed his sword, which he held under his arm, and plunged it suddenly into the breast of our poor Cassimir."

"Ah Heaven!" exclaimed Phedora, turning extremely pale—"yet tell me all."

"My father," continued Catherine, "had pursued the steps of Rectzizi; to prevent the catastrophe he arrived only in time to behold; and shocked at the atrocious wickedness of the assassin, forgot his accustomed prudence whilst he sustained his young friend in his arms. Cassimir was not yet insensible to all that passed around him, and dreading lest some further outrage should follow the reproaches my father heaped upon the wretch, he besought him to be calm, that every

every thing might yet be done to recover their dear unfortunate Phedora. Mrs. Stenau asserted that you were taken away by a man you had pointed out to her, and whom you had called Michaelhoff:—" Oh the villain !" cried my father, " I know him too well." He then, at the request of Rectzizi, resigned him to the support of his servant, who appeared particularly affected by the situation of his master, whilst he went towards the residence of the governor, to complain to him of the cruel oppression of Colonel Rimbach, and entreat of him to interpose his authority to have you restored to your friends : but ere he had hurried forward an hundred paces, he was stopt by a Rus guard, who prevented the intended application, by forcing him back to the river side : and when he told his story to the officer who commanded the party, to induce him to lend his assistance in removing you, he coolly replied, that Colonel Rimbach had already mentioned the affair to the governor, who would not suffer a Rus subject to be carried

carried to Casan under the influence of a Livonian party; and as the Colonel was acquainted with the girl's friends and connections, he was the most proper person to have the guardianship of her, until she could be resigned to their care. My father likewise learnt from him that Rectzizi was to be put under immediate arrest, and this act of injustice completed the indignation which had begun to assail him. On arriving however, at the busy scene they had quitted but a few moments, he found that Cassimir had been removed: his conductors on hearing this, did not seem surprised or disconcerted, but immediately put my father into a boat, and desiring him to name the transport destined to receive him, sent him off to it without an instant of delay. He found it in vain to resist, and therefore yielded to their measures, though he felt the most acute uneasiness for Rectzizi, for you, for my mother and for me: it was rather alleviated however, when he was put on board, by finding us all there, save only our lamented Phe-

dora. The servant of Cassimir had heard of the intended arrest, and scarcely knowing what he did, carried his beloved master, who had fainted in his arms, into a boat, which he directed to the Catherine transport : there he procured him further aid, for his wound had only been slightly bound up on shore, and when he recovered, he beheld the Stenaus near him, and at the same time, my dear unhappy mother and myself, appeared before him. He instantly enquired for our Phedora ; but we, alas ! could not give him any intelligence of you, nor did we then know the particulars of what had passed ; for the cruel Russ soldiers who lined the shore, would not suffer us to quit the boat, and when they found that Rectzizi, of whom they stood in some awe, did not return, they compelled us to seek again the transport.— We assailed my father the instant he appeared, with questions concerning you, and when he answered with a sorrowful motion of the head, poor Rectzizi, who watched impatiently

impatiently for the reply, uttered a groan, and again fainted.

“ At this distressing moment the vessel began to move, and my mother called upon your name with agonizing shrieks. Ah ! dear Phedora ! think what we must have felt, to know you torn so barbarously from us, and in the power we imagined of such a villain as Rimbach ! I know not how I sustained myself under this afflicting idea ; and I was inexpressibly grieved too, for the misery my poor mother and Rectzizi suffered. My father sat some time looking up, as you know he always does when he is afflicted, and then employed himself in endeavouring to console us : he said that Heaven would not desert you, and bid us rely upon the protection of Providence to avert all those evils which to our short sighted perception seemed so ready to crush you. Ah, Phedora, how sweetly did he prophecy ! his words recalled us to ourselves, and even Rectzizi listened to him with some degree of hope. He had been reduced by

anxiety and loss of blood, to those faintings which to me appeared so alarming ; but his wound was not dangerous.

“ We arrived on the following morning at a little place below Pleskow, where we were to have found the waggons appointed to convey us to our new and dreaded place of abode : but fortunately they had been delayed by some accident, and our poor Rectzizi rested three days ere we were compelled to proceed. He was then considerably recovered, and could endure the slow motion of one of the carriages without much inconvenience and pain—but a new mortification awaited him—he was originally to have had the command of the company that guarded the division in which our little party travelled, and now he learnt what had been hitherto concealed from him, that he had been superseded ; and a Russ brute, as devoid of humanity as the wolves of Siberia, had been appointed in his place.

‘ I am deprived then,’ exclaimed Rectzizi, ‘ of the consolation which I thought yet



yet remained to me ; but since I cannot soothe the horrors of your banishment, how can I too much mourn the cruel occurrences, that united to take from me the possibility of succouring that dear and lovely girl ! I would have joyfully submitted to the arrest, which they would not have dared to prolong, after the representations I could have made to the governor. It is past however, and useless to repine : it is likewise cruel and selfish to aggravate your sorrows, by adding my regrets to them : no—I will exert myself to lessen your distresses, and what I want in power, I will make up in sympathy and commiseration.'

" After this generous resolution, he appeared to recover his composure, though a deep sadness clouded his countenance.

" We had travelled some days, when my poor mother found herself much fatigued, and the continual anxiety of her mind, not only on your account, my dear Phedora, but lest she should never again behold her darling Ivan, preyed still more upon her health.

Rectizi applied to the savage Rus for permission to rest a few hours, on the fifth day of our painful peregrination, but his request was ill-received, and his representations equally vain: my mother—my dear unhappy mother was compelled to endure almost without respite, a fatigue she was wholly incapable of sustaining. Yet with what gentle patience did she suffer, and how incredibly would she struggle to hide those sufferings from her weeping friends.— At length our generous Cassimir, not able to behold her sinking rapidly under them, again interceded and remonstrated with the Rus, and to the same effect: he raved with vehement execrations against the cruelty of this monster,\* who not daring to execute against him the malignity he meditated, upon some trivial

\* The severities practised against the Livonians, in their banishment to Casan and Astracan, were so rigorous, that when Peter recalled them at the intercession of his Empress Catherine, who was herself a Livonian, it was found that a very small number had survived the journey. They were transported in close waggons, and the men chained together like felons.



trivial pretence, put my father and Ulrich Stenau in irons : they were chained together like many other of our unhappy countrymen, and the motion of the waggon was often insupportable to them, when from lassitude they were obliged to quit the position which they had found to be the least painful.—You shudder, dear Phedora—shall I yet go on ?”

“ Yes, yes,” returned she, “ let me give my tribute of tears and agony to this sad, sad scene of woe.”

“ I will proceed then,” said Catherine, “ if you wish it ; yet oh, Phedora, I have more horrors to relate ! Think what the feelings of my mother must be, at such a spectacle, conscious that she was herself the unhappy cause of it, however innocent.—Rectzizi, half frantic with mingled rage and pity, committed such extravagances, that he was removed from us by force : his violence burst open his wound anew, and he was borne away half senseless. Mrs. Stenau sat stupified with grief and fear, and neither spoke nor moved. Whilst I hung weeping

over my mother, unable to view the situation of my much enduring father : I felt her bosom heave with a quick and painful effort as I pressed my face against it, and her good and gentle heart seemed bursting its prison.

‘ Catherine,’ said she, in that mild voice with which every sentiment was uttered, ‘ comfort your father : try my child to console your friends, and conjure them to pity the wretched, the heart-broken being, who occasions this wide-spreading calamity.— Alas ! I should have borne my cross with fortitude, and I have weakly cast it on the shoulders of those I most love and revere, without relieving my own sufferings. Oh how bitterly have I increased them, and how ill have I profited by those precepts—that almost divine example your excellent father has ever set me in adversity ! I bow me before him in this agony of sorrow that rends my soul, and through thee, my child, do I seek the forgiveness of my friends, for the evil I have brought upon their heads : let thy beloved accents entreat it for me.’

“ Here

“ Here my father, whose utterance seemed choaked, raised his arm towards her with a look of pity and affection; but the chain that encircled it rattled as he moved, and my unhappy mother shrank at the sound, and closed her eyes, as if to shut out an object so horrible, as a revered husband—the affectionate father of her children, fettered with barbarous severity.

“ At the next village where we were permitted to halt a few minutes, my mother tried to obtain a degree of composure, which I almost thought it impossible she should ever again feel, and expressed a wish to walk to a clump of firs at a small distance, to repose herself, if only for a moment, beneath their cooling shade. My father assented to her inclination, and would have accompanied her, but that Ulric Stenau was either unwilling or incapable of moving above a dozen paces. I gave her therefore my assistance, and weak as it was, she scarcely used it, but hurried forward with an impatient step. Beneath the trees I observed the brutal Russ

indulging in a repast, which compared with those we obtained, was highly luxurious. I should not have noticed perhaps, the delicacies placed before him, had I not so ardently longed to make my dear drooping mother partake of them. I imagined that she would have retreated when she perceived the brute, but she had, it seemed, seen him before she quitted our companions in misfortune, and instantly conceived a design which was the offspring of despair. In a tremor she eagerly went up to him, and throwing herself at his feet, sought to awaken his compassion in terms that would have melted, I thought, any heart nourished with human blood. She implored his forgiveness for the error her husband had committed, and conjured him to remove his chains, and place them upon her. The obdurate wretch listened to her intercessions without emotion, and gazing upon me, who wept with violence whilst I endeavoured to support my poor mother, that she might not fall prostrate to the earth, he demanded if I was her daughter.

‘ She

‘ She is,’ replied my dear unsuspecting parent ; ‘ let her affliction, her youth, and innocence, plead for her suffering father.’

‘ They already have,’ returned the vile Rufs, ‘ rather more successfully than your moaning’

“ He then ordered a soldier to release Stenau and his companion from their fetters ; and my mother, half fearful of the event, and half rejoicing, returned to the waggon with still more alacrity than she had left it. The injunctions of our persecutor had already been obeyed, and my father was moving, though slowly, to meet us : he embraced us both with affection, but with an accompanying emotion I could too well account for in the altered looks of my mother, who appeared overcome with the exertion she had used, and almost sinking to the earth.

“ Ah, Phedora ! we soon learnt the horrible price the wretch had affixed to his clemency. Elated into hope with the advantage we had already obtained, I could not forbear enquiring into the situation of the

generous Rectzizi, and imploring that we might be suffered to attend him.

‘ No, my pretty Catherine,’ replied the Russ, ‘ I will have no rival near you : you have already betrayed too much interest for that foolish fellow ; but at present you must love him less and regard me more. And if I am satisfied with your conduct, the old people shall be made comfortable when we get to Casan, and you shall be as great as any Boyard’s lady.’

“ Fortunately my unhappy parents did not hear this detestable overture : for had my father been present, I fear his indignation would have hurried him to reproaches that might have doubled our calamities. The moment the Russ had uttered the sentence, I flew from him with a horror I could not repress, and appeared before our little melancholy circle, still frightened, and breathless with the haste I had made. My mother, who knew what my mission had been, instantly exclaimed, ‘ Rectzizi is dead !’

‘ No,



‘No, no,’ cried I, ‘he lives; but——’

‘What would you say, my Catherine?’ asked my father.

‘We must no longer think of happiness or comfort,’ I replied, unable to check the fears that assailed me; then bursting into tears, I had the thoughtless barbarity to redouble their anxiety, by my wild and incoherent grief. The Stenaus, who plunged into stupid insensibility, scarcely ever regarded what passed, now joined their enquiries to those of my trembling parents.

‘Tell us, my child, I conjure you, what has thus agitated you,’ said my mother with looks of horror, ‘let me know the worst.’

‘Speak, poor unfortunate girl!’ cried my father, ‘speak!’

“I now found that their terrors had even carried them beyond the ill, and I hastened to communicate the hateful intimation I had received from the Rufs.

‘Be comforted, my daughter,’ said the best of men; I will resume my chains, and you shall retain your innocence: we can

live—we can smile under every misery but the glowing consciousness of infamy. We can die in peace under the hand of oppression, but we cannot exist in guilt, without those bitter self-accusations which poison every hard-earned enjoyment of vice.’

‘Yes, my child, be comforted,’ rejoined my mother, ‘we will yet be as happy as integrity, and a reliance on Heaven, can make us.’

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## CHAP. II.

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“At length ’tis night, and I have reach’d my home ;

“Forgetting all the toils and troubles past,

“Weary I lay me down, and sleep for ever.”

“OH ! PHEDORA,” continued Mrs. Lumerski, “let me slightly pass over the threats, the still more detested entreaties of the hateful Rus.—Again was my father loaded with chains, and poor Ulric participated

pated in the evil. My mother became more and more exhausted by sickness, distress, and fatigue, and even the soldiers under the command of our savage persecutor, pitied our miseries : he would have outraged humanity so far as to have torn me from the arms of my parents, but that we afterwards learnt, he feared to excite the indignation of his men to a degree fatal to himself; but short of this, every agony he could inflict we suffered.

“ At length he presented himself before us one day that we were permitted to rest a few hours in a village : I had endeavoured to lift my poor feeble mother from the wagon to give her a little air ; my father could scarcely at all assist me, because he feared to hurt her with his irons, and that he was compelled with one arm to support Ulric Stenau with whom he was fettered, and who was now sunk into an unvarying state of imbecility. But all my whole exerted strength was  
insufficient

insufficient to support her with gentleness and safety to the ground, and our unhappy countrymen, some of whom saw my distress, offered not to relieve it : for it seemed as if their misfortunes had encompassed their hearts with a callous insensibility, both to their own sufferings and those of others :—most of them, like my poor father and Ulric, were chained in pairs, and all of them sat about the empty carriages whenever we stooped, in attitudes of sullen despair, without appearing sensible of what passed immediately before their eyes. I was nearly giving up my intention from inability to compass it, when a Russ soldier humanely offered his assistance, and placed my dying mother upon the grass. She looked up to him, and clasped her hands in thankfulness ; for the closeness of the waggon, which was so covered as to admit very little air, dreadfully oppressed her.

“ It was at this moment that the author of our misery stood before us ; and pointing  
to

to my mother whilst he addressed me, ‘ you see,’ cried he, ‘ what your obstinacy has caused : but I pardon you, and to humour your scruples, will make you my wife.’

“ What were my feelings at these words ! My compliance with this horrid proposal would snatch the galling fetters from the limbs of my father, and be the means of procuring for my other—my still more suffering parent, those indulgencies her languishing situation so much required. Involuntarily I bent my eyes towards her, and saw her struggling with a convulsive emotion : I shrieked, and threw my arms round her, whilst my father uttered a deep sigh, and gazed at us in silence.

‘ At a more favourable opportunity’ said the wretch, unmoved by our distress, ‘ I will see you again.’

“ He then released us from the additional anguish his presence gave us, and my dear  
generous

generous unhappy mother could then express the sentiments that laboured in her bosom.

‘I charge you, Catherine,’ she cried, with a momentary animation, ‘not to suffer your tender duty to your parents, to plunge you into the most horrible—the most dreadful of all punishments ! Think not, my child, to lighten our miseries by uniting yourself to a monster whom your soul abhors : no, my gentle Catherine, such a sacrifice would heighten the malignity of our fate, and clog my last instants with the most insupportable bitterness. Your father too, would only part with his fetters for the keener and more lasting torture of seeing his dear self-devoted girl dragging through a life of anguish, and looking for repose to the early opening grave. My doom is fixed : you cannot prolong my days, do not render the few hours I have to live unutterably painful, by hesitating to pronounce that no mistaken consideration for my welfare shall induce you to promise  
your



your love and obedience to a man, who can so wantonly inflict the most agonizing pangs upon his fellow-creatures.'

'Ah, my mother!' exclaimed I, almost dissolved in tears, 'you want air, you want rest and more delicate food: these I might procure for you.'

'And rob me of the soothing hope I cherish of your future happiness,' interrupted she, with hasty eagerness.

'Catherine,' said my father, 'give this best of women the satisfaction of knowing that you obey her: I feel that her reasoning is just; yet alas! I dread the event—not for myself, God knows, but for her, for you, and our poor friends, who are so cruelly implicated in our ill fortune.'

"I instantly pronounced what she called the sweetest assurance she could receive, and almost immediately we were hurried to the waggon to pursue our melancholy journey. The next day our tormentor again obtruded upon us his hated presence: and with a  
courage

courage I still recollect in astonishment, I rejected his solicitations to marriage, as I had done those of a dishonourable nature. Even at this distance of time I tremble at the expression that gleamed over his vile countenance—I wound your heart, Phedora, with this recital, but I must continue it : for now that it renews those sorrows time had deadened, I feel a mournful pleasure in mingling my tears with yours.”

“Do—do go on,” returned the sobbing Phedora ; “let me hear all, that I may still more admire, love, and revere my second mother.”

“She spoke of you,” resumed Catherine, “in her last moments : she called upon your name, and that of my brother—blessed you both, and charged me, if we ever met again, to bear to you her last farewell. But I will return to that part of my narrative at which I interrupted myself. We soon experienced the malice of the Rus at this second disappointment ; for we were now no longer suffered

ferred to move from the waggon, from a pretended fear of our escaping : my father had his limbs almost crushed with the heaviest irons with which our savage conductors had been provided, and my mother, almost insensible to her own deplorable situation, now lay stretched upon the uneasy bed I had contrived to make for her, unable to swallow the wretched food that was allowed us.

“ Thus she lingered three days, and then recovering her scattered senses a few moments before they left her for ever, she looked round her, and recognized my father and her poor Catherine ; and calling for our congratulations, told us she should soon be released.

‘ Live, my husband,’ added the best of mothers, ‘ live for our children, who will comfort you for my departure—for I am persuaded you will be again united to my beloved Ivan : tell him he was ever the darling of his mother’s heart, and let him not prove that her fondness was misplaced, by ever deviating from virtue.’

“ She

“She then took the hand my silent father extended to her, and kissed the fetter that encircled his wrist :—‘ It is for the happiness of our dear girl,’ continued she, ‘ that you wear these chains : her grateful duty will lighten them, and when the Almighty puts from you the cup of sorrow, you will reflect with secret transport, that it was not aggravated into an irremediable evil by a sacrifice at once cruel and unavailing.’

“We could not speak, and the dear sufferer herself now ceased. In ten minutes she again resumed with a fainter voice, enjoining us to cherish her Phedora if Heaven restored her to us. Again she paused and then bade the Stenaus farewell. She blessed us all—and in a few hours her gentle spirit fled.— Oh what a moment ! let me not think of it—yet amidst our bitter transports of grief, one care obtruded, too important not to occupy the sad mind of my father, and fill mine with the most dreadful solicitude : this was the fear of having the revered remains torn from us, and cast with contemptuous negligence

gence on the road side to be defaced—devoured—oh horrid ! We had witnessed this unhallowed barbarity too, too often in our forced and dreary pilgrimage : we therefore kept the gloomy secret with jealous care from the knowledge of our guards, and my father hoped we should arrive at our destination before we should be compelled to reveal it.— Vain expectation ! Our unhappy fate denied us the sad privilege of daily weeping over the grave of her we lamented : the closeness of the waggon, and its perpetual motion over the rugged roads, had an effect we most dreaded, and at length our fellow sufferers, unable after the third day to endure the inconveniences of being so near the still dear and cherished corpse, betrayed us to the cruel soldiers. The waggon was instantly stopped, and they made their way into it :— I too well guessed their design, and seizing the inanimate body in my arms, grasped it with trembling energy, whilst I regarded those who meant to deprive me of it with a horror approaching to frenzy. They soon however,

however, overcame my poor efforts, and all that was left of my beloved mother was violently taken from me.

“ I followed the unfeeling wretches with an eager step, disregarding the loud anguish my father could no longer repress, and saw them dragging the corpse with disrespectful haste to a little thicket by the road side.— Oh can I ever forget the pang that assailed my heart at this agonizing sight ! I shrieked with frantic violence, and snatching up a sabre, which one of the men had laid near the waggon, unsheathed it, not knowing what I did, and madly attempted to wound the soldier I first attained : but he avoided the blow, and took the dangerous weapon from me. My fury then subsided into anguish unmixed, and the Russ savages displayed some slight marks of compassion. I implored them to let me bury my beloved mother—to suffer me to hide the dear remains from beasts of prey, and mark the sacred spot by some poor little token of filial fondness



fondness. They hesitated—I renewed my intercessions with still greater energy in proportion as I conceived hopes of succeeding : but ere they had assented to my prayers, my father came slowly to the spot, dragging with him the unhappy partner of his fetters. He could not speak, but his looks of sorrowful entreaty, his venerable countenance dressed in unutterable woe, overcame the hard obduracy of the guard, and hastily they dug a shallow grave. My father raised his eyes to Heaven in earnest prayer, as he hung over his departed wife, and I flew to collect some large stones I saw near the place, to mark the spot out to us, if again we should ever repass the unpropitious road : they were almost beyond my utmost effort to carry, yet at that moment I felt not the toil. At length the men would no longer be detained—my father snatched up one of the lifeless hands, and pressed it to his heart, then turned away with a deep groan—I threw myself by the side of the body, and impressed with parting kisses every feature of that fallen countenance which had so often

smiled upon me with maternal love. The guard called upon me impatiently to hasten. Oh, Phedora—I wrapped up that dear face, and it was put into the earth. My father repeated aloud the service for the dead, whilst the soldiers filled up the humble grave, and I, eager to place my little memorial over it, exerted myself with supernatural strength, lest I should be forced away before I had soothed my bursting heart, by accomplishing my fond intention.

“ My father still continued in the attitude of prayer, though his voice had ceased : soon however, the soldiers recalled his thoughts from the Heaven to which they were raised, by enforcing his return to the waggon : they carried me to it—Alas ! it no longer contained the form of her we so tenderly mourned. I threw myself on the space she had occupied, and watered it with my tears ; but when I had remained some time in a position which marked the despair of my soul, I was roused by the voice of my father, who  
in

in a solemn accent, desired me to rise. I instantly obeyed ; and his exhortation to me to be comforted, restored my mind to some degree of calmness : I was forcibly struck with the justness of his argument, and began to think indeed that my grief was selfish. I then dried up my tears, and uttered with him a thanksgiving that the dear deceased was taken from her sorrows to the eternal abode of peace : recollecting too, that she had said my duty would soften my father's fetters, I turned all my attention to what appeared to be her last injunction. He was now much emaciated, and to my apprehensive imagination yet weaker than he really was.

“ At last, after a long and heavy—heavy journey, we arrived at our place of destination : by this time Ulric Stenau was evidently dying ; but his situation did not affect his wife with any apparent grief, neither could our condolence or entreaties draw from her a single word ; but silent and almost motionless, she sat with her eyes fixed

upon the ground, and took her meals from my hands without raising them a moment. My father endeavoured to rouse both her and her husband from their strange stupor, that they might exert themselves to save from pillage the little property they still possessed: but his efforts were vain, and we saw the Rus soldiers carry off the principal part of it with triumphant barbarity, without being able essentially to succour our poor friends. As for ourselves, we had little indeed to hide from the depredators, yet even that little was much diminished.

“ The day after our arrival in a barren plain, a few versts to the north of the town of Casan, my father was released from his wretched companion, and lighter chains were placed upon him, that he might assist in building huts for those who were quite unable to exert even the poor efforts he was compelled to use. Alas! they were beyond his strength, and the sultry beams, which darted upon his uncovered head, produced

an almost insupportable increase of fatigue : he must have sunk under it, but that I left the poor Stenaus for hours, to attend to a superior duty. Oh, Phedora ! to me how sweet was the toil that gave him rest !

“ One day that I was helping him to drag a small piece of timber, yet large enough almost to overpower our united efforts, I saw an officer in the Russian uniform walking hastily towards us : I thought it had been our hateful persecutor who often came to torture us with his cruel taunts, and aggravate the painful labour of my dear unhappy father, by forbidding me to assist him. And now, when I saw this wretch approaching, I generally fled, that he might not discover I still disobeyed him : as usual therefore, I hid myself behind the body of a large tree, and saw him as I thought accost my father, who continued his wearying employment, whilst the drops fell from his venerable face, and watered the path he trod. But what was my surprise—my transport, when I saw this

supposed monster fast locked in the arms of my beloved parent, who called to me to quit my retreat. I flew to him, and recognized in the officer the pale thin image of what had been Rectzizi. Think, Phedora, of the rapture of finding a long-lost friend at a moment when the heart is bursting with hopeless anguish and despair ! I experienced it, and careless of those forms which in happier days would have restrained my emotion, I seized his hand, and bathing it with a sudden flow of tears, threw myself on his bosom, and sobbed aloud : and he too was so much moved at our altered looks, the recollection of our loss, and the extenuating labour to which my father had been doomed, that his own cheeks were moistened by compassion and sympathy. He gazed alternately at my father and me, then bent his eyes towards the piece of wood we had been dragging with such weary efforts, shuddered and exclaimed against the barbarity that could impose such a toil : but for the present he could not bid it cease. He hastened from



us therefore, with a promise of seeking our wretched dwelling in the evening.

“ We watched his parting footsteps over the plain, and saw him take the road to Casan. Oh how light was now my heart ! the prospect of seeing my father relieved, cheered my spirits, and renovated every power both of body and mind. We renewed our task, but not in hopeless anguish, and softened every exertion by talking of our dear Rectzizi, who had, we had imagined to that hour, fallen a victim to his generous compassion : we had been too much hurried to enquire how he had escaped the unjust oppression of our tyrant, or how he had obtained liberty to seek us out ; and now we busied our imaginations with a variety of conjectures, which in the evening we hoped to end.

“ Ah, Phedora ! you have counted the lagging minutes as they slowly—slowly rolled—you have gazed as we did, at the mid-

day sun, and thought it never would descend—like as you may have hastened your toil in the vain unconscious idea of urging forward the hours in which that toil was wont to be performed! At length the twilight came on; we saw the north lights glimmer in the sky, but the signal for the poor Livonians to leave their work was delayed—oh how cruelly! Whilst we anxiously awaited it, Reetzizi again appeared: he was accompanied by his servant and the Russ who superintended our labour. This man unlocked my father's fetters, and the worthy Cassimir eagerly took them off: I knelt before him, and kissed those hands which had given liberty to the best, the most patient, the most revered of men: he raised me from the ground, and took from his servant some refreshments which he made us swallow.—As I knew not the extent of his benevolence, I wished to preserve a part of the nourishment he had presented to me, for the poor Stenaus: but he guessed my intention, and told

told me he had seen and taken care of our companions in misfortune.

“ A few minutes after, he accompanied us to our hut, and entered with us : here we found further vestiges of the active friendship of Rectzizi ; but Ulric Stenau could no longer be benefited by them, for he was expiring in the arms of his wife, who had been roused by the unexpected attentions of our dear benefactor, to some degree of sensibility. This scene of death, terrible in itself, was to us still more grievous, from the recollections it awakened : again we wept the best of wives, and the most tender of mothers. Rectzizi guessed our sensations, and to divert us from dwelling upon our loss, called upon my father to exert the little skill he possessed, to endeavour to restore the poor man. He knew that all human aid was vain, but thus applied to, and observing the entreaty seconded by the petitioning eyes of Mrs. Stenau, he attempted to bring back animation to the form, from whence it was

fleeing for ever. The whole night was spent in this hopeless task, and towards the dawn Ulric entirely ceased to breathe : my father then motioned to me to take Mrs. Stenau to the outside of the hut, for now again she appeared stupified, and almost fainting under a grief she had not the power of expressing either by tears or utterance.

“ The air rather revived her ; and when I had drawn her a little way from our dwelling, the remains of poor Ulric were removed by the direction of Rectzizi, and I then brought her back to it. Our dear and indefatigable friend assisted us in paying to our deceased companion all the respect we could show to his memory, and this duty over, his cares were of a nature less gloomy.

“ We had then leisure to enquire what had befallen him, since he had been so cruelly removed from us, and he briefly told us that he was seized with a fever when he recovered his recollection, and was indebted for his  
life

life to the faithful affection of his servant.— He was however, far from being re-established in health when he arrived at Casan, and with much entreaty persuaded the poor fellow to leave him for a few hours in a little tent he had erected, and come in search of us, for whom he had felt the utmost anxiety, though from the malignity of the commander he had not been able to gain any tidings of us whilst the journey lasted. The servant, uneasy at leaving his invalid master wholly without attendance, hastened to the plain where the Livonians had been stationed, and with much difficulty found out our hut : at that moment it only contained the unhappy Stenaus ; and from them he could not extract any intelligence : but from our wretched neighbours he learnt that some of the party his master was so much interested for, had died on the road. The poor fellow, eager to return, enquired no further, but delivered this vague account to Rectzizi, together with the deplorable state of the Stenaus. He was much shocked at it, and fearing

there had been some dreadful cruelty practised against us, determined to apply instantly to the governor of Casan, that if we yet lived, the Russ Commander might be compelled to produce us. Weak as he was, he crawled to the town; but unfortunately the governor was absent in an excursion down the Wolga; and poor Rectzizi felt the effects of his benevolence in venturing out; for the heat of the weather, and the fatigue of walking further than his reduced strength would admit of renewed his fever, and it was many days before he could repeat his visit to Casan. At length, when he succeeded in being introduced to the governor, every difficulty he had feared of having his statement discredited by the superior influence of the malignant Russ, vanished on beholding in his person a French Colonel, who had served in the army of the famous Le Fort, the favourite of the Czar Peter.\* My father, you may remember, Phedora, gave us the history of this Le Fort. Phedora assented with a sign.

\* Vide History of Peter the Great.



sign.—“His countryman,” continued Mrs. Lumeriski, “Colonel de Verlin, was well acquainted with Count Rectzizi, and not wholly unknown to Cassimir, whom he scarcely recognised in the lamentable situation to which he was reduced: but the moment he heard his name, he embraced him with friendship, and made him an immediate offer of his services. Rectzizi, well convinced of his humanity, related the savage conduct of our Rus's oppressor, and imparted his fears concerning our suspicious disappearance—the insults he had himself received, he reserved for a future moment.

“The brutal Rus's was instantly sent for, interrogated with severity, and menaced with the severest punishment, unless he produced us without hesitation: it happened that he had not seen us for two days, and imagining we had perished under the hardships he had been so particularly active in inflicting upon us, his answers were confused and contradictory. The worthy governor, whose com-  
passion

passion was interested for us, and his detestation raised against the wretch our tormentor, immediately ordered that he should receive the Knout,\* until he confessed what had been our fate.

“ Rectzizi, meanwhile, ever intent on doing good, procured a carriage at Casan, and came to our little unhappy colony to assist the Stenaus: he was directed by his servant to our hut, whilst my father and myself were as usual toiling under the parching sun, which darted his unimpeded beams over the sandy plain. His tender attentions to Mrs. Stenau, together with the unexpected sight of one whose appearance promised relief, brought the long-absent tears to her eyes, and recollection to her mind. After some confusion of thought, she told the almost disbelieving Rectzizi that the poor Leuhaupts were abroad, and would not return till evening.

‘ The

\* The punishment of the Knout, or Knute, was not at that time deemed infamous,

‘ The Leuhaupts !’ exclaimed he, ‘ do they live ?’

‘ I have some notion,’ she replied, ‘ that they go out to labour : yet stay—I think Mrs. Leuhaupt is dead.’

‘ Where can I find the unhappy survivors ?’ demanded Rectzizi with impatience.

‘ I know not,’ returned she, quite exhausted with the effort she had made.

“ Cassimir then left the hut, and was directed to us by some fellow sufferers : he forgot all that he had endured, and his present weakness to fly and give us comfort.—When he had attained my father, he gazed earnestly at him ; but so much was he already altered, that Rectzizi doubted if indeed he beheld his friend. The beloved and venerable labourer kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, that he might not be irritated by the sight of that malicious countenance which he imagined was then contemplating with satisfaction his painful efforts : he redoubled them however, in the hope of avoiding those reproaches he found himself at that instant

unable to endure with his accustomed patience.

‘ Stay, stay !’ cried Rectzizi, shocked at such an object, ‘ repose yourself, good old man—who can impose a task so much exceeding your strength ?’

“ My father looked up, and the mien and features of the generous Cassimir met his eyes.”

‘ What were my emotions,’ said Rectzizi, as he ended his little narrative, ‘ when I observed the fettered arms extended to embrace me—when I discovered in this emaciated figure my revered Leuhaupt : it was a moment of contending happiness and pain, and fortunate was it for me, that the tears of my good Catherine taught mine to flow.’

“ The cruel Rus was still more severely punished when the extent of his barbarity was discovered. My father, Mrs. Stenau, and myself, were removed by our benefactor to the town of Casan, where we threw ourselves at the feet of the governor, and gave him, in return for his active compassion, our  
thanks

thanks and prayers for his eternal felicity. Rectzizi now resigned to Mrs. Stenau that part of her husband's property which had been conveyed to Casan in his name ; but she felt indifferent to every thing that was wont so much to interest her, and seldom spoke but to bewail her husband, her son, and the gentle Phedora Rubenski. I now discovered," continued Catherine, " that one of those beings was extremely dear to Rectzizi ; and those lamentations in which the beloved name was mentioned were always listened to with great emotion, and followed by the most earnest endeavours to soften her grief, and a partiality for the society of the mourner.

" At length her health broken by so many trials, entirely gave way to a variety of maladies, and she expired in my arms, bequeathing to my father the remnant of her once ample possessions. At the funeral of this poor woman, at which he officially assisted as minister, the worthy governor being accidentally present, discovered our religious tenets :

tenets : he was himself of the same persuasion, and had left his native country in consequence of a sovereign edict,\* which prohibited him from avowing it. His benevolence to us, which had hitherto been the offspring of compassion alone, now proceeded from congeniality of sentiment and opinion : my father and his motherless girl were then lodged more commodiously at the express desire of Colonel de Verlin, and we were fed from his table. The good Rectzizi rejoiced in our amended prospects ; but our acknowledgments to him, which we could not always restrain, as the first author of the change, gave him, he said, the only pain we had ever voluntarily made him suffer.

“ Our Russ persecutor, not at all shocked at what had appeared to us so ignominious a punishment, reviewed his men, the first time he could leave his apartment, with his  
usual

\* The edict of Nantes, which lost so many subjects to France, drove many Protestants into Russia, where they were employed in both military and civil capacities by Peter.



usual composure, and caused them to be disciplined with the same accustomed severity, though the stripes were scarcely healed upon his own back. The intimacy which now took place between the governor and my father, was favourable to the friendship they had conceived for each other, and in the retired moments of Colonel de Verlin, they were hardly ever asunder. Rectzizi now became my companion, and Phedora the theme of our long conversations: his own confession confirmed the surmises I had formed, and at that time I thought not of the obstacles of rank and fortune, but encouraged his hopes and wishes, by perpetually uniting to them mine for your mutual happiness. I confess, dear Phedora, that I might perhaps have repined at the conquest your superior attractions had made, had I not recollected that my Lumerski had often bestowed upon me such glances as now animated the countenance of Rectzizi when he spoke of you: I remembered too, many circumstances which seemed to flatter the idea,  
and

and I thought, if I could behold again my brother, our Rubenski and this Lumeriski, I should have nothing further to wish, except indeed to revisit the grave of my dear deceased parent, and secure it from profanation.

“ Cassimir, finding us firmly possessed of the favour and protection of the governor, began to sigh to return to his friends ; and Colonel de Verlin gave him the necessary leave of absence, and signed a memorial that stated very truly the decay of his health, and the entire loss of it, that must be the consequence of a longer residence at Casan.— Rectzizi then took an affectionate leave of us, with the strongest assurances of exerting himself with his friends to procure a repeal of our banishment, which, with all the un hoped for advantages we had so providentially met with, was still a forced seclusion from our country and from those we loved.

“ Do you think, Phedora, we failed to recommend you to the diligent enquiry of  
Cassimir;

Cassimir; the injunction was unnecessary indeed, yet we could not forbear to make it. How fervent were his protestations, that he would not rest until he had discovered your abode, and forced the villain Rimbach to resign you! We had yet another request to make—it was, that he would endeavour to trace out the hallowed spot where the remains of my beloved mother had been deposited, and observe if they yet appeared sacred from the prowling savage, or bird of prey. This too he zealously promised; and in a day or two joined some factors, who were travelling to Moscow, and we followed him with prayers and blessings. My father felt the loss we had sustained by his departure, but not so sensibly as I did; for I had no one with whom I could now converse with confidence and friendship, when he was engaged with the governor; and as they could not but be sensible of my solitary situation, I was often admitted, from affection on the one side, and complaisance on the other, to their society. The subjects of conversation

tion were at those times such as I could participate in, and de Verlin often entertained me with accounts of the manners and customs of his own country : they amused me much ; but I was at intervals tempted to be incredulous, from the strange and perplexing contradictions his narratives frequently involved him in. My father smiled at my simplicity, and the governor had the good nature to say he admired it ; and at length, in a moment of communicative freedom, he gave me his own history, and showed me a picture of a French lady he had been compelled to quit for ever, because her attachment to him had caused her parents, who were Catholics, to shut her up in a convent. He said she was beautiful, and asked me if I did not think so, from the resemblance I held in my hand, which he said was a very good one.

‘ I am afraid,’ replied I, ‘ you will laugh at me, when I say I do not like all this about her head, neither do I know what it is.’

‘ There

‘ There is no definite term for it,’ returned De Verlin, ‘ it is meant for ornament.’

“ I know, Phedora, that you will blush at my reply—I turned to my father, and bade him recall the countenance of our Rubenski with her long glossy hair braided round her head, or flowing from it in wavy trusses, or even, added I, with the fur cap she wore in our Livonian winters: oh how beautiful, how engaging was her sweet face !

‘ So then,’ cried the governor, half offended, ‘ you do not think this portrait engaging ?’

‘ I think,’ replied I, ‘ there is too much of this which you call ornament: I cannot like it—and indeed it is my opinion that Phedora’s fur cap is a better ornament.’

“ He laughed, but applied to my father for his decision, upon the superiority of his picture over the features of the Livonian beauty I spoke of. My father’s judgment was secretly in my favour; but he declined avowing it until De Verlin insisted that he should,

should, who was then both surprised and chagrined, on discovering that in his estimation as well as mine, our Phedora was preferred : indeed his displeasure was so far beyond the occasion, that for a short time his manner was cool and distant. But the natural goodness of his heart soon overcame the little mortification he had endured, and he laughed very heartily at our taste, though he acknowledged he had a curiosity to see this Rubenski we had so highly extolled.

“ My father was even now indefatigable in pursuing the sacred function to which he had devoted himself : our unhappy countrymen received what they were entitled to from his hands, all the assistance, comfort, and good offices he could do them. He often visited them, and indeed had become the universal pastor of this poor alienated flock : he did not however, confine his cares to their welfare alone, but extended them to the Mahometan Tartars who live in and about Casan : he softened their manners,  
humanised

humanised their hearts, and at length convinced them of their errors. Yet his health at this period unfortunately required a change of air, and the worthy governor took us with him in a frigate upon the Wolga: these little expeditions, whilst they wore the appearance of a scheme of pleasure, were in reality intended to intimidate the pirates that infested the river, for the vessel was well armed.

“ We sailed a considerable way towards Astracan; as far as a place called Kasspor; and as the autumnal season advanced, the cooling breezes we enjoyed, and the generous attention of De Verlin to every thing that could restore my father, had the effect I so earnestly wished: he even experienced some degree of cheerfulness, and often returned the most fervent thanks to Heaven, for the many blessings its merciful hand had scattered amidst our distresses.



“ In the winter, when sledges were perpetually passing between Moscow and Casan, we were surprised at not hearing any intelligence of Rectzizi, and every enquiry made by the governor concerning him was wholly unsuccessful. We became uneasy at his total silence, which could only be occasioned, we were well persuaded, by captivity or death; and our mournful suggestions appeared too well founded, when the summer again approached without bringing any tidings of our friend. How ardently I longed to embrace once again my beloved Phedora, and our poor Ivan, your affectionate heart can well imagine: think then how tediously those eighteen long months passed by, which we spent without the hope of ever beholding in this world, two beings I thought of with an affection the most tender. Ah! dear Rubenski! how proportionably extravagant was my joy, when we learnt the unexpected mandate that was to restore us to those we loved, that told us too, of their welfare and their unabated kindness.

“ Unhappily

“ Unhappily, when it arrived, Colonel De Verlin had taken us in fledges to a pretty little habitation, of which he was very fond, situated in an island formed by the surrounding Wolga, near Sinbirska, about seventy miles from Casan; and the delay caused by this circumstance, by retarding our journey, nearly proved fatal to us. My father heard his good fortune with a chastened joy, which evinced the equanimity of his mind, whilst mine was all confusion and transport. The good Colonel testified his friendship in every way most serviceable to us, and likely to lessen the inconveniencies of our journey: he busied himself in procuring us defences against the inclemency of the weather, and selected the most beautiful furs for this purpose. My father would have checked his munificence, but he was offended with the effort, and redoubled his bountiful cares upon every remonstrance we ventured to make.

“ At length, after a hasty preparation, we received the parting embrace of the worthy governor, who could not, generous as he was, forbear at that moment from expressing some regret at our recall : and we were greatly affected at bidding adieu to a man who had done so much to promote our happiness, without a motive that had not originated in humanity, and a reverence for the religion he professed.

“ We did not forget, as you may well imagine, to look out for the spot where the dear and venerated remains of my mother had been deposited : but alas ! the snow had hidden every object from us, and we passed the place without being able to distinguish it. When we had advanced with all the speed we could make, as far on our journey as Arzamas, about half way to Moscow, the frost began to break, to our great mortification and inconvenience : we still however, endeavoured to go forward, but were compelled to return to Arzamas, which

which we could scarcely reach again, though we had only travelled from it a few versts. My father endured the disappointment, keen as it was, with his accustomed patience; but your poor Catherine was not so philosophical: I could not avoid shedding tears, on learning that we were inevitably detained for a month at least. Terribly long did my impatience render this tedious month to me! At length we ventured forward, and slowly, with much difficulty, reached Moscow. My heart bounded when I beheld that immense city; yet on arriving at it, I was destined again to experience disappointment. The first enquiry made by my father, was for the abode of the Count Rectzizi, and the answer informed him, that the family of the Count had quitted Russia near two months back: he returned to the house we occupied, wearied, and much grieved with this intelligence.—What a trial was this to an affection like ours! He consoled me however, and cheered my spirits with the probability of your being

still at Moscow, waiting our arrival with tender anxiety. Having rested and refreshed himself, he again went out to learn if the regiment to which our dear Ivan belonged, were quartered in the town : and whilst I longed with extreme impatience to be informed of this, now expecting with the most lively hope, to embrace my brother, and now fearing that he might have been ordered perhaps five hundred miles off, he rushed into the room where I sat, and folded me in his arms.

“ As our first emotion a little subsided, he eagerly enquired for my father : I informed him that he was gone to gain some intelligence of his beloved son, and asked, with some surprise, how it happened that he had so soon discovered our abode.

‘ Do you think, Catherine,’ replied he, ‘ that I have not, for some time back, ardently sought out every traveller that entered Moscow by the eastern suburb ? How often has my heart beat with fond expectation,

tion, and not as now, been blessed with the realization of its wishes !’

‘ Tell me,’ cried I hastily, ‘ where is our Rubenski ?’

“ Ah ! dear Phedora ! his countenance, before all animation, fell in an instant, and with an air of sadness, he said that you had quitted Moscow. My enquiries then produced a confession of his attachment to you ; and I immediately recollected the fondness with which he used to regard you in Livonia. I sympathised in his disappointment, yet still I found myself interested for the success of Rectzizi, the preserver of my father, the alleviator of our griefs. Ivan could not penetrate however, into my sentiments, which might have appeared unkind, though they could not make any alteration in his destiny.

“ An hour elapsed, and my father returned not : we both became uneasy at his continued absence, and Ivan, who had hitherto waited with me that he might the sooner

meet and embrace the affectionate parent from whom he had been so long divided, could hardly be restrained by my representations from flying out to seek him : another heavy half hour went by ; and at the moment in which Ivan opened the door to trace the footsteps of his father, he appeared at it. I gazed at them both with as much delight as they mutually felt : Ivan supported our poor wearied parent in his arms, who overcome with fatigue, and the emotions of joy that poured upon his heart, could scarcely sustain himself.

‘ My father—my beloved father !’ exclaimed Ivan in an animated accent.

‘ Thou dear supporter of my age !’ returned the best of men : ‘ ah ! my Ivan,’ added he, ‘ had thy mother lived to see thee distinguished, elevated by thy meritorious conduct—but we shall meet again, be again united to that most excellent of human creatures !’

“ My brother’s heart was softened by this mention of our mother, and his tears flowed with  
with



with ours from those sensations of regret, the weakness of humanity made us feel in spite of reason and religion. I wished to prevent my father from renewing the pain I had given Ivan, by my enquiry for you ; but as I opened my lips to tell him that you were gone from Moscow, he turned to my brother, and repeated the unlucky question of “ where is our Phedora ? ”

‘ She has forsaken us,’ replied he ; ‘ not even the certainty of your immediate arrival here, could induce her to remain at Moscow.’

‘ Cruel Ivan !’ exclaimed Phedora with much resentment, ‘ to represent me thus to my best friends, as an ungrateful wretch whom they ought to abhor !’

‘ Be not angry with him,’ cried Mrs. Lumerfki, ‘ he spoke under the influence of a momentary displeasure, that vanished with his words, and gave place to the sadness that appeared a more constant inmate in his bosom. My father was astonished at the intimation, and Ivan himself instantly and eagerly defended your conduct, by revealing

the motives which had induced you to follow the Baroness to Poland.'

" We were shocked to hear that Rimbach was at Moscow : he was not however, quite recovered from the punishment inflicted by the Baron, and the cool contempt with which Ivan spoke of him, reassured us lest he should attempt to avenge the perfidies we had experienced at his hands. My brother did not quit us until late in the evening ; and the next morning, when he came to us again, which he had previously told us could only be after he had exercised his men, he was accompanied by Lumeriski. Ivan looked more elated than on the preceding day, and presented his friend to me with an air I did not comprehend the meaning of : it had however, the effect he seemed to expect, that of giving me confusion, which he smiled on observing. Lumeriski was all joy and animation : he embraced my father with affection, and addressed me in a manner so peculiarly tender, that I began to understand the meaning of those looks Ivan darted alternately

ternately at him, and his poor blushing Catherine.

“ I learnt, some time after, that my Lumerski had distinguished me by his generous attachment when in Livonia, and had then made it known to my father, who fearing to wound the bosom of his susceptible daughter by the long and uncertain separation that ensued, had charged him to avoid giving me any intimation of his love, until we met in happier and more tranquil days.

“ Lumerski seemed, at our first interview, in no haste to depart ; but suddenly recollecting the commissions you had given him, he left us to get the letters and packets.— In his absence Ivan drew my father aside, and communicated to him the constant attachment of his friend, who soon returned, and put into our hands the memorials of our Phedora’s valued affection : I wept over your letter—my father, on reading the one addressed to him, exclaimed, ‘ Sweet and ami-

able child ! when shall these paternal arms again fold thee to my bosom ?'

" Our poor Ivan was much affected, and explained to us why he had not been entrusted with the commission : we were all distressed that you had parted with the rubles, which a thousand accidents might render so necessary to you—too generous Phedora ! Your other, more extensive care which the agent of the Baron—but I will not hurt you by dwelling upon it : yet in that particular you unintentionally gave us pain. Lumerski now said that he had some unlucky circumstances to relate respecting you, which he dreaded to tell me of. I was alarmed at the uneasiness he suffered whilst he prepared me to hear something extremely faulty of himself : and as you were at the moment in actual safety, I was much relieved by hearing his long detail.

' Did I act right,' continued Catherine, smiling, ' to forgive this conceited Lumerski, and tell him that the amiable Phedora

dora had herself enjoined me to receive him with kindness ?'

Phedora assented very readily, and her friend then continued.—“ When Ivan was absent, I enquired of Lumeriski, if he had lately seen Cassimir, and he informed me of his strange conduct to you, and that it appeared from your account, he had so sedulously shunned you, that you had not even an opportunity, when under the same roof, to learn from him the intelligence you so much wished to obtain of your Livonian friends. I was infinitely surprised at this unaccountable news, after having listened so repeatedly to his professions of attachment to you ; and my embarrassment was considerably encreased, when a few days after, Ivan accused him of being the obstacle to his happiness, and mentioned his having surprised him on his knees before you : he told me too, that the Count and Countess had sent you to the house of the Baroness Hartzen, that Rectzizi might not persecute you with his unavailing importunities.

“ It

“ It was impossible that I should reconcile so many contradictions ; and it was not until I had met with Cassimir himself that I discovered the truth.

“ A fortnight after our arrival at Moscow, my father gave me to the most disinterested of men, because a few days from that time his regiment was ordered into the Ukraine. We left Ivan at Moscow, from whence we have heard he is since removed, and we travelled southward ; but when we had proceeded about two hundred versts, the troops were countermanded, and my father and I accompanied Lumerski to Warsaw. Here we were pleasantly surprised to find Restzizi, who having been severely wounded in a skirmish with a straggling party of Swedes, whilst he was in a division of the army of Prince Menzikoff, had been left at Czersk whilst his party advanced towards Volhynia to meet the Czar. As Cassimir recovered, he journeyed slowly to Warsaw, where he heard the main body of the Imperial army was hastening ; and one day, as he sat in melancholy

choly inactivity, he heard accidentally that some troops had newly arrived in the town, commanded by General Hartfen : this circumstance induced him to make further enquiries ; but though he was told that the Baron had not yet joined this detachment, he learnt his own vicinity to his old friend Lumerski, whom he had not seen since they parted in Livonia. We were all pleased at this unexpected meeting, and it was not long before I made him explain the enigmas I had been puzzled to unravel.

“ He was, as you may suppose Phedora, soon undeceived as to your imaginary engagement with poor Ivan, and we now waited with impatience the appearance of the Baron, from whom we hoped to learn where you then were. Cassimir meantime, gave me a detail of the disasters which had befallen him on his quitting Casan : he had so strictly fulfilled our injunctions of seeking for the humble grave of my dear mother, that the little caravan he travelled with, left him



to pursue his search alone, and in a most unlucky minute, for he had discovered the revered spot, and the stones I had placed there remained exactly as I had described them to him. He flew back to his fellow-travellers, whom he had persuaded to rest at about the distance of a verst, but they were no where to be seen : his faithful servant had not however, forsaken him, but it was some hours before they met, because Rectzizi had dispatched him forward on the road to examine it carefully, whilst he returned some way back, to retrace the steps which the party had just trod. The village I had mentioned to him, as being within a short distance of the grave, they had recently passed, and he had tolerably well ascertained the place, before his search began.

“ The servant, alarmed at seeing the caravan pass without observing his master, demanded the reason of it, and was told that they could wait no longer without the certainty of being benighted on a very dangerous

gerous spot, the haunt of a band of Tartars : he conjured them in vain to stay only one five minutes longer : they had already, they said, waited two hours for the return of his master, and they must instantly pursue their way. The poor fellow then flew wildly about, calling upon Rectzizi, but without success until it was too late to overtake the caravan. They were compelled therefore, to prosecute the journey alone and on foot, and the next day they lost their road, and fell in with a party of Calmucks,\* who seized and stripped them of their money and cloaths, giving them in exchange the same garments they themselves wore. With these people Rectzizi wandered about near a year, enduring with them every inconvenience attending their way of life ; but at length, having committed some depredations in the neighbourhood of Nise-Novogorod, they  
were

\* The many violences committed by these barbarians induced the Russian Government to compel them to take up their habitation on the banks of the Wolga, below Astracan, where they have less opportunity of robbery and murder.

were taken by a party of Russ soldiers from that town, who had been some time seeking them out. Rectzizi then made himself known, and procuring with some difficulty a small supply of money from a Russ merchant, he hastened to Moscow, where he found the regiment he had quitted for his appointment in the detachment that accompanied us to Casan, and immediately solicited to be reinstated in the command of a company then vacant in it, because he learnt it was on the point of marching into Livonia, where he hoped to meet with you: and it was on this business that he attended at the War-Office, where he so unexpectedly encountered his father, who in conversing with his newly-recovered Cassimir whilst he was unavoidably detained at the Kremlin, unconsciously blighted all his hopes, by advert-  
ing to your approaching union with Ivan.

“This unlucky intelligence occasioned all those cold looks and amazing solicitude to avoid you, that so much grieved my poor  
Phedora:

Phedora : and the conversation which passed between you at the house of the Baroness Hartfen, where your meaning was so strangely misconceived, irritated him beyond measure.

‘ Speak no more upon this subject, dear Catherine,’ interrupted Phedora, ‘ in this particular only you can give me pain.’

‘ I have done,’ replied Mrs. Lumerski, ‘ and will no more resume the topic. I have only to mention further, that the Baron’s information gave us all the severest shock—my sweet Rubenski, I hope I shall never again weep your death : it is surely quite sufficient that once in my life I feel all the misery of losing the beloved companion of my childhood, and the friend of my maturer years.’

Phedora fervently thanked the gentle narrator, and in a few minutes they rejoined Mr. Leuhaupt and Alexy, who were employed the one in giving, and the other in receiving instruction.

CHAP.

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C H A P. III.

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———" You Gods, look down,

" And from your sacred vials pour your graces

" Upon this sweet child's head : tell me, mine own,

" Where hast thou been preserv'd ? how liv'd ? how found ?"

THOUGH Phedora had checked the hopes of Rectzizi, and forbid him ever to repeat them to her, she still imagined he would call, as usual, to pass an hour with his friends : but in this she was disappointed, for on the last two days he had not appeared, and Lumerski at length informed his wife that he was suddenly gone to Lublin to meet his family. Phedora felt hurt that he had left Warsaw without bidding Catherine and herself farewell : but she would not confess it even to Mrs. Lumerski, and endeavoured to console herself with the immediate prospect

prospect of seeing the amiable Baroness, who verified the prediction of her husband, in travelling night and day to assure herself of the truth of the intelligence she thought too strange and too pleasing to be hastily believed. Without waiting for the introduction of the Baron, she flew, on her first arrival, to the house of Lumerski; and the sight of the travelling carriage alone announced her, before Phedora found herself clasped in her arms.

The emotions of the Baroness, which on every occasion were peculiarly lively, were not even exceeded by the effusions of tenderness which the gentle bosom of Phedora, less a stranger to them, experienced. Mr. Leuhaupt and his daughter she was well prepared to love; yet though the tears still hung upon her cheek, she could not forbear, on beholding Lumerski, from favouring him with one those expressive smiles which had so much disconcerted him on their first acquaintance. Alexy soon introduced himself to her notice

tice with considerable advantage, from the circumstance of being in a humour to perpetrate a great deal of mischief: the presence of the stranger, whose vivacious air and good natured caresses very much pleased him, was so far from repressing this inclination, that it rather appeared to induce the boy to persevere in his frolics, whilst he found them so evidently amusing. The Baroness regarded him attentively for some minutes, and enquired to whom he belonged.

“To Phedora,” cried Lumeriski; “but our good General means to make a soldier of him, and has already seduced his affections from us all.”

The Baron now entered, and having welcomed his lady to Warsaw, caught up Alexy, and presented him to her, asking at the same time if she did not think he had a most engaging countenance. Madame Hartsen kissed the child, and then suddenly pushed him from her with a deep sigh, which appeared



peared to disconcert the Baron, who immediately set him down. Mr. Leuhaupt, to restore his usual ease and composure, questioned him upon some indifferent subject, and the Baroness, then taking the hand of her young friend, enquired if she would again venture to place herself under her protection.

Phedora looked at Mrs. Lumeriski, who recollecting the lecture she had received from her father, appeared distressed at the idea of parting with her Rubenski, but did not oppose the wishes of Madame Hartsen.

“ You do not answer me, my little heroine,” resumed the Baroness; “ has then all your courage and resolution been washed away by that tremendous current that bore you from me? Ah! my pretty Phedora! poor Jalgourouki, at that moment, found himself assailed by such violent apprehensions, that he broke silence, precipitated himself into a quick motion, and lost sight of all the wisdom he had been collecting with such solemn

solemn trouble for so many years. I do not suppose the unlucky Russ is yet acquainted with your preservation and—but good Heaven! tell me how you were preserved.”

“Do not, dear Madam, require me to inform you at such a moment as this,” replied Phedora, “when my mind is too much agitated with the happiness of meeting you, to enable me to remember any distressing occurrence.”

“I must then hear it,” replied Madame Hartsen, “to-morrow at the farthest: at present let me secure the society of these worthy and respectable beings I see you with, by carrying you off to my habitation, where I am sure they will follow you. Do, good Phedora, indulge me in this particular, or I may betray you to your friend Rimbach; or at least give all my interest to forward the suit of the magnificent Jalgourouski.”

“Do not threaten me thus,” cried she, smiling, “but suffer me to have all the merit of quitting my sweet Catherine at your request

quest alone, since you have condescended to make it."

"Be it so," said the Baronefs, "I retract my menaces: but pray what is become of my friend Ivan? I imagined that I should have found him here."

"We left him at Moscow," returned Mr. Leuhaupt; "he has since quitted it; we have not at present any hope of seeing him shortly in Poland."

She expressed regret at this circumstance, and made Catherine smile, by declaring that she was very much in love with her brother. Madame Hartfen then insisted that the whole party should pass the next day with her.

"I have looked into my house," said she gaily, "and find it decently habitable; so you must not refuse to become the first guests I see in it."

After having received a ready assent, she agreed that Phedora should remain with

Mrs. Lumerfki until then, and went home to repose, after the fatigue of travelling two days and nights without intermission.

When she had withdrawn, Catherine professed herself much pleased with her : “ but,” added she to Phedora, “ I should think your Baroness much more amiable, if she did not deprive me of your society.”

“ Her vivacity,” observed Mr. Leuhaupt, “ is blended with tenderness and feeling, and can never therefore be disgusting : but what most recommends her to my good opinion and friendship, “ is her sincere attachment to our little Rubenski !”

Phedora thanked the good man with an expressive look, and Mrs. Lumerfki was silenced by this tacit reproof of the selfishness of the objection she had advanced against Madame Hartfen.

Alexy accompanied his friends the following day, at the earnest request of the Baron, who

who called upon Mrs. Lumerfki in the morning, and charged her to suffer him to be one of her escorts. The child was still in high spirits, and as much inclined to mischief as when the Baroness had first beheld him. Mr. Leubaupt, who had remarked the emotion of Madame Hartfen, when her husband had presented Alexy to her notice, imagined that she admitted him from motives of complaisance, and that he might not therefore disgust her by his noisy frolicks, the good man checked him very seriously for the wild uproar he created the moment he entered the apartment of the Baroness; and he was so much offended by this unexpected disapprobation, that he clung to Phedora, hiding his face, and no persuasion could again make him look up.

The Baron was disappointed of his play-fellow by this fit of resentment, and Phedora, to procure a return of Alexy's good-humour, led him into a garden she had observed from the window, where she suffered

him to run to and fro till his wrath was entirely forgotten. Whilst he was thus employed, and his fair companion leaning against a tree deeply musing, Bastina, the principal female attendant of the Baroness, ran up to her with an expression of delight in her countenance, and warmly congratulated her on having escaped the dreadful torrent.

Phedora received this testimony of goodwill with her usual complacency; and the woman, encouraged by her smiles, and urged by curiosity, eagerly questioned her concerning the manner of her deliverance. But the short account of it which Phedora gave, by no means satisfied her, and she continued her enquiries with avidity until the meeting with Alexy was mentioned. Bastina then listened with anxious impatience, and ere Phedora had finished her narrative, she flew to the boy, and compelling him to remain quiet, examined his luxurious tresses with eager trepidation, and discovered, on the  
back

back of his head, a small lock of hair of a glossy white, hidden from common observation by the longer ringlets that fell over his shoulders.

“Here—here it is!” she exclaimed, with an emotion that shook her whole frame:—yes—oh yes, he is—he is the young Baron Frederick!—Heaven preserve my senses—it is the young Baron—what will my lady say—what will the Baron say—it is indeed the young Baron Frederick!”

“Whom do you mean by the young Baron?” said Phedora in the most painful doubt and surprise.

“I mean this child,” replied Bastina;—“my sister, who was his nurse, lost him when he was only seven months old, in the forest of Minski.”

“But you spoke of the Baron and your lady,” said Phedora in an eager yet tremulous accent.

“What will they say!” exclaimed the woman; “but I did not do it—what will



they say when they hear how we deceived them !”

Whilst she spoke, the Baron appeared, who came in search of the little Alexy ; and the self-convicted culprit immediately threw herself on her knees before him, imploring forgiveness.

“ What is the meaning of this ?” demanded he in the utmost astonishment :—

“ Bastina, have you lost your senses ?”

“ I shall indeed lose my wits,” replied the woman, “ unless I am pardoned by my lady Baroness and you !”

“ Tell me, Phedora,” cried he, “ what she means ?”

“ I scarcely dare to believe,” replied she hesitating, “ that what I understand is true. She calls Alexy the young Baron Frederick !”

“ Frederick !” repeated he, starting.

“ He is indeed !” exclaimed the weeping Bastina ; “ and unless I am forgiven, I shall die with grief and shame !”

“ Frederick !”

“ Frederick!” cried the Baron: “ the woman is surely mad !”

“ Here is my lady !” said the attendant, in an agony : and unable to remain in her presence, she disappeared ; whilst the Baroness addressed Phedora with her usual gaiety, desiring to be informed if she had entirely deserted her old friends, to associate only with Alexy.

“ What can the woman mean ?” still repeated the Baron, extremely agitated ; “ she must be surely crazy !”

Madame Hartfen, not comprehending the subject of this apostrophe, which had not the appearance of being very obliging, looked at her husband and Phedora alternately for information : but he was wholly incapable of giving it, nor did he in the height of his emotion, perceive that what he said excited surprise : but occupied solely by the ideas which the conduct of Bastina had given rise to, he followed her abruptly, to compel some kind of explanation.

“ My dear Phedora,” exclaimed Madame Hartfen, “ tell me—is the mind of the good Baron suddenly deranged ?”

“ I know not—I hope not,” hesitated Phedora.

“ What can be the subject of all this confusion ?” resumed the Baroness : you shall accompany me back to my guests, and they must interrogate you. Prepare yourself therefore, for our united examinations.”

“ Mr. Leuhaupt,” continued she, “ as she entered the apartment, “ exert your influence with Phedora to make her explain the reason of the embarrassment her countenance betrays : and why she is at this moment so absent as to be quite unconscious of my accusations ?”

“ No, indeed,” cried Phedora, “ I am not so ; and I will confess to Mr. Leuhaupt without being further questioned : but he alone must listen to me.”

“ Are you serious ?” asked Madame Hartfen in an altered tone : “ you shall be indulged

“dulged however ; so lead Mr. Leuhaupt into the next room.”

Lumerski and Catherine, who knew not what to think of this conversation, gazed at their young friend, as she followed the instructions of the Baroness in withdrawing with their father, and perceived in her aspect an agitation which alarmed them.

“What is this important secret, my dear child ?” said Mr. Leuhaupt, as she shut the door.

“Alexy,” replied she with eager haste, “is the son of the Baroness : at least so I understand Bastina her woman, who says he is young Baron Frederick.”

“The son of the Baroness !” repeated Mr. Leuhaupt.

“She did not say so,” rejoined Phedora : “but I understand it from her exclamations. And if it should be thus, who can so well prepare Madame Hartsen as you can, my

dear Sir, to listen to this discovery with some degree of composure."

"Have you ever heard that she had lost a son?" asked Mr. Leuhaupt.

"I never heard her speak upon the subject: but the Baron appeared extremely agitated when Bastina mentioned the name of Frederick; and I dread lest my kind friend, whose feelings are acute, should be overwhelmed by a sudden explanation of this strange secret, if Alexy, as I cannot help supposing, be indeed so nearly allied to her."

Mr. Leuhaupt was beginning a reply, when a piercing scream from the apartment they had quitted, drew their steps thither, and they found the Baron with Alexy in his arms, bending over his insensible wife, and calling upon her to revive and bless their son. Phedora instantly flew to aid Mrs. Lumerski in restoring the Baroness, and more assistance being procured by Mr. Leuhaupt, he thought it expedient to draw the enraptured father out of the apartment, partly by force

and partly by entreaty. Lumierski accompanied him, and shortly after, Madame Hartfen gave signs of returning animation.—She had scarcely regained her utterance, when looking earnestly at Phedora, “Tell me,” she cried, “you whose lips are never stained with falsehood—tell me, I solemnly adjure you, am I cruelly mocked by a suppositious tale, or is this boy my son?”

“I cannot affirm it positively,” replied Phedora, much distressed; “but I believe Bastina can satisfy your doubts.”

“Oh barbarous wretch!” exclaimed the Baroness, “I cannot see her! yet let her come, and relieve this distracting suspense—and hide—hide that child from me, until I know if I am to fold him to my bosom with a delight almost agonizing, or regard him—poor innocent! as the unconscious awakener of those bitter and torturing sensations time had softened almost to annihilation!”

Phedora, terrified at her vehemence, flew to seek Bastina; and finding the Baron in

the antichamber, eager to introduce Alexy again to his mother, which Mr. Leuhaupt and Lumerski could hardly restrain him from, she mentioned the request of Madame Hartfen, that the child might not be brought to her, till she had heard a circumstantial confession from Bastina.

“ Oh what a cold unnatural precaution !” exclaimed the Baron ; “ does not her heart convince her more powerfully than any proof that can be produced ?”

“ She fears,” said Phedora timidly, “ to be deceived.”

“ My good Baron,” interrupted Mr. Leuhaupt, “ let reason convince her of what you must think she trembles to disbelieve.”

Phedora, rightly supposing the impatience of the Baroness would be highly painful, now hastened to Bastina, who had hid herself from the expected reproaches of her injured mistress, and it was with infinite difficulty Phedora



dora could persuade her to appear in her presence.

“ Save me,” cried the poor woman “ from the indignation of my lady—save me from her angry enquiries ! I take the saints to witness, that neither my sister nor I had any thought but that the young Baron was devoured by wild beasts : we little fancied that we had been leaving him, poor baby, to shift for himself in that dreary place !”

“ Come immediately to the Baroness, good Bastina,” said Phedora ; “ perhaps you will find her less irritated against you than you imagine : come however, without hesitation—you ought at least, by an explicit confession of all that relates to Alexy, to end the dreadful state of agitation into which your errors have plunged her.”

“ Yes, I will own it all,” replied the culprit eagerly ; “ I will own it all, if my lady does not kill me by a severity I have well deserved.”

“ Hasten

“Hasten then,” cried Phedora, “the Baroness suffers greatly from suspense.”

She then dragged the trembling wretch to the apartment where she left Madame Hartfen with Catherine: the former started as they entered, and covered her face, that she might not behold a being who had so cruelly injured her. Bastina dropped upon her knees near the door, and with a voice broken by sobs, implored forgiveness.

“Tell me all,” said the Baroness impatiently, “and do not add to the sufferings you have been the cause of, by keeping me thus on the rack.”

“Recollect yourself, Bastina,” said Phedora with gentleness; “and try to relate distinctly how you lost the young Baron in the forest of Minski.”

“My sister his nurse lost him,” replied the woman, speaking to Phedora, whose countenance encouraged her; “but I was with her, and I am as guilty as she is, because

cause I helped to deceive the other servants that accompanied the child, and confirmed the story that was told to them and to our mistress."

"Heaven give me patience!" cried Madame Hartsen, uncovering her face, but turning her back upon the culprit.

Phedora motioned to her to go on.—  
 "When the Baron," continued Bastina, "first went to Moscow, the season being very rigorous, as my lady may remember, she wished to stay in Poland with the baby, and follow my master in the summer: but the Baron persuaded her to go with him, saying he should return perhaps in a month or two, and it would be better to leave little Frederick with his nurse, my sister, who was very fond of him, and not take him at all to Russia. So my lady unwillingly enough, God knows, agreed to it at last."

The Baroness sighed.—"Continue, Bastina," cried she with emotion.

"But,"

“ But,” resumed the woman, “ left my sister should fall sick, and the young Baron, in that case, not be well attended to, I was left with him too. In two months we heard that our master was made a General to the Great Duke of Russia, and early in the summer my sister received orders to bring her nursling to Moscow. Almost directly, we began our journey, accompanied by old Charles, whom my master sent on purpose, and two servants who had been left in Poland when my lady went away. We arrived without any accident at that fatal forest, and there we got out of the carriage to give the dear child some air, for he looked a little puling. Charles brought our dinner, and laid it out upon the grass: whilst we were eating,’ added Bastina, looking at the Baroness with apprehension, ‘ my sister spread a thick mantle upon the ground, and wrapping the young Baron in another, laid him upon it, and he soon fell into a sleep. Just as we had finished our meal, the men, who were at some distance, called out to us to run and see a curious

rious animal they had caught ; and we went to them and——”

“ And left the dear unhappy baby !” said the Baronefs, clafping her hands with energy : “ oh thoughtlefs, unfeeling wretches ! and I, a mother, to trust my child with fuch—but go on.”

“ When we returned to the place,” continued the trembling Baftina, “ we faw all the victuals devoured, and the things fcattered about : my fifter fcreamed, and I turned round to fee what was the matter, when, oh God forgive us ! the child was gone ! Upon the mantle, that had been laid under him, I difcovered the print of a beaft’s paw, and then indeed I gave him up for loft. My fifter stamped and pulled her hair off, and fcreamed fo loud that Charles came up—the other men had gone to get the carriage ready for us to proceed—he asked what ailed her, and all diftracted, we told him the young Baron was eat up by a wild beaft.”

Madame Hartfen fhuddered.—“ He looked at the marks on the mantle, and  
turning

turning pale, said that they were the impression of a bear's foot.

‘Then,’ said my sister, ‘he shall devour me too, for I will never see the Baroness again; and I will be left here, and be served as that dear infant has been served.’

“However, old Charles told her it was of no use to talk so, and since the accident had happened, we must make the best of it.

“Monster!” murmured Madame Hartfen.—Bastina continued.—“Charles kept looking about him all the while, as if he thought the bear was coming again, and I began to be afraid of it too, though my heart was breaking for the sweet infant.

‘So,’ said he to me, ‘take up the mantle, and come along.’

“I snatched it up, for I was frightened only to touch it, and I heard Charles say to himself, ‘Ay, ay, that must do;’ and then he took some napkins that lay scattered about, what our victuals had been wrapped up in, and

and rolled them in the mantle, and laid it on my arm, as if it had been a child.

‘ Say that the young Baron is very ill,’ said he, ‘ and come along.’

“ Then he took my sister, who was still wringing her hands, and beating herself, and pulled her away from the place : and as we went to the carriage, he said to her, ‘ What will become of you if the Baron and Barones know how the child perished ? You must say that he is ill, and when we get to Lubazyn, we will send off one of the men express to Moscow, and so get rid of him : and the other is a drunken dog, and we will blind him with liquor.’

“ I was loth to join in this deceit, and my sister much more so.

‘ No,’ said she, stopping and looking at old Charles like any thing mad, ‘ I won’t do this ; for I have been a neglectful wretch to this dear babe, and I will suffer for it : and you don’t care about him, or you would not be thinking of the anger you would get.— Oh what will the poor Barones say, when she



she hears this dismal news ! It will kill her, and I shall have her death to answer for.'

'Don't run on so,' said Charles ; ' but listen to me : if you don't want to grieve the Baroness, why should you tell her how bad things have been ? Why should she not be made to think that the young Baron died in spite of all you could do for him ; and that you tended and nursed him as kindly as she could have done. God knows if I could bring the poor child to life again by it, I would go run my head into a lion's den—but what would that do for him ? I can't bring him to life again, or else I would.'

" My sister was softened by this, and agreed that it would only make things worse to kill the Baroness, by telling all. So we let old Charles manage it as he chose.

" When we came up to the carriage, the men asked us what made us stay so long, and said they had just agreed to come and look for us. Says Charles to them, ' The young

young Baron is very bad, and we must get on to Lubazyn as fast as we can.'

" So they did not wonder to see nurse and I all crying and sobbing : for we could not forbear, when we looked upon the mantle, and thought how the poor child was not in it. At last we got to Lubazyn, and Charles sent off one of the servants to Moscow, as he said, to let the Baron know that the baby was dying : and the other fellow, having plenty of drink, never troubled his head about any thing else. And then old Charles took a horse to ride somewhere, he said, for a doctor, and bid us be careful, and not betray ourselves whilst he was gone.

" He was away all the day, and we kept close ; at night Charles came back, and said the doctor would come soon. He brought a little trunk into the room with him, and when all was safe, he opened it— and oh the saints ! took out a dead child. My sister thought at first it had been the body of Baron Frederick, and screamed and  
tore

tore her flesh, and threw herself on the ground for madness and grief, to think the breath was quite gone out of him : but Charles hushed her, though not before the people had run up, on hearing her shrieks : and he went to the door and told them the infant was dead, and nurse wild with sorrow. I snatched up some linen that laid near, and threw it over the little corpse ; but they went down again without putting their heads into the room ; and then Charles told my sister that this dead baby was one he had got a great way off, and not the young Baron : so he helped to lay it out upon the bed, and I was obliged to put some of the dear lost child's cloaths upon it, for my sister could not bear even to look at it.

“ In about an hour the doctor came ; and Charles paid him for his trouble, and told him he was too late : so he never asked any questions, but went away very well satisfied. But now came on our fears ; for I bethought me that the young Baron's hair, which

which was very thick and long for such an infant, was brown, and this dead child's was quite flaxen, and very little of it : and then if my lady wanted to look at it when she came, though we could put her off of that, yet she might have the coffin opened, to take off some hair to remember him by, as I recollected she had done of her mother. But Charles took care of that too, by getting some brown hair much of the colour of Baron Frederic's.

'Suppose,' said my sister, who had not taken much notice till then, 'that my lady should want the lock of white hair that grew on the back of his head.'

"What do you mean?" said Charles.

'There was such a one,' said my sister, 'and the Baroness took great notice of it.'

'Well,' said he, 'if that's all, my hair is white, and some of it must do.'

'No, but it won't do,' said my sister;—  
'for the lock that grew on the child's head, Bastina knows, was as soft as silk, all wavy, and shining like silver.'

'I

‘ I well remember it was so,’ cried the Baroness eagerly, turning to the narrator : ‘ what would you infer from thence ? Is this—this child Alexy so distinguished ?’

‘ The Baron told you so, Madam,’ said Catherine.

‘ I heard him not,’ replied she with a deep sigh. Conviction then flashed upon her mind, already too much agitated, and her senses again forsook her.

“ Bastina, shocked at the situation of her mistress, flew out of the room, almost bereft of her reason, exclaiming that she should never be forgiven : her cries and wild demeanor alarmed Mr. Leuhaupt, and the Baron was no longer to be restrained from taking little Frederic to his mother.—Unconscious as she was, he made the child caress her, and when she opened her eyes, she found his little arms twined round her neck. Having hastily satisfied her throbbing heart, by parting his long tresses, and beholding the well-known mark, she clasped the boy to her bosom, and burst into a pas-

sionate fit of tears. Catherine and Phedora wept too, and even the Baron, overcome by his emotions, suffered the drops to fall down his cheek.

When Madame Hartfen had indulged her tenderness for some time, Mr. Leuhaupt gently reminded her, that after the violent conflict of passions she had endured, she stood in great need of repose.

“ I will never more lose sight of this dear injured child for a moment,” said she vehemently : “ oh what have I not suffered from leaving him, poor baby, to careless mercenaries !”

Then suddenly falling on her knees before Phedora, “ It is to you,” added the Baroness, “ that I owe the happiness of embracing my poor abandoned Frederick : but for you he might still have lived in savage ignorance, herding with the brutes who were more kind to him than those wretches whose cruel negligence overwhelmed me with such desolate misery”.

“ The Baron,” resumed she, yielding to the efforts of Phedora to raise her, “ has told me with what gentle sweetness you won the untried affections of this dear little wild being. His heart has ever yearned to our boy : but I thought him cruel to dwell with such fondness on a theme that recalled my dormant griefs, by compelling me to reflect, that had fate been less unkind, my lost Frederick would not have left room in his heart for a predilection so unaccountably deep-rooted.”

“ I was inconsiderate, I own,” replied the Baron ; “ nor can I deny but that I perceived your regrets, when you observed my love for our little Alexy : let the powerful impulse I could not withstand or control, plead my pardon.”

“ I not only forgive you,” said Madame Hartsen, “ but feel that you are dearer to me for the fault : but let us now attend to our guests : my Frederick must assist me to amuse them—he must too, at every period of his life, assist us to pay the debt of affection and gratitude due to our dear Phedora.—

Sweet



Sweet girl! The first thing I teach this beloved boy will be to estimate the unbounded obligations you have heaped upon him—upon his father—upon his fond mother.”

“Spare yourself these effusions, dearest Baroness,” said Mr. Leuhaupt, “and think not at this moment of your guests: we will leave you for the present to soothe your heart with more spontaneous attentions.”

Both the Baron and his lady opposed this intimation; but Mr. Lumerski and Catherine warmly seconding it, the Baroness at length assented that they should retire, with a thankful acknowledgment for a consideration so well timed. Phedora would have accompanied them; but this neither Madame Hartsen nor her son would permit: and Catherine was compelled to depart without her.

Alexy, as the Baron still called him, had been quite unable to comprehend those scenes in which he had been reinstated in his birth-right; he received however, the caresses of his mother with complacency, and

had observed her tears and distress of mind with wonder and compassion : for though, like hers, his temper and disposition were vivacious in the extreme, like hers his heart was equally capable of the most tender sensibility.

Phedora contemplated the happiness of this generous pair, with a delight that stole from her bosom every regret, but that most powerful one, of being, from the want of birth and fortune, unworthy of an alliance with the family of Rectzizi. This bar, not only to her own happiness, but to that of Cassimir, she deplored in secret with a bitterness, that from its too evident effect on her health, at length alarmed her friends.— She passed her time almost equally with the Baroness and Catherine ; yet much as she loved them both, she preferred silence and solitude to either. Even the attachment of young Frederick importuned her, because with him she could not indulge for an instant, the reveries that frequently seized her.

Mr.

Mr. Leuhaupt regarded her with anxiety and pity ; and the Baroness observed that he appeared often on the point of uttering something, which as it rose to his lips, was suppressed with a painful effort. She imagined that it related to Rectzizi, and privately asked him if he was apprised of the motive of his abrupt departure from Warsaw.

“ I fear,” returned the good man, “ he is gone to Lublin, in the desperate hope of engaging the consent of his family to a marriage with our poor Phedora : had he communicated his design to me before he left us, I might perhaps have assisted it ; but precipitated by love and the natural impetuosity of youth, he flew away without intimating his intentions, and most probably, by this circumstance, defeated his own wishes.”

“ I pity him much,” said the Baroness ; “ I pity them both : is it then too late to afford him the assistance you allude to ?”

“ I fear it is,” replied Mr. Leuhaupt.

The conversation was then accidentally interrupted ; and though the Baroness much wished to discover in what manner Mr. Leuhaupt could have promoted the design he ascribed to Rectzizi, she easily discerned that he did not mean to explain the secret.

When the agitations of Madame Hartfen had subsided into a more placid happiness, she could not forbear requiring of Phedora, to repeat minutely every circumstance relating to her fortunate meeting with little Frederick, and her request was very readily indulged. The Baron, Mr. Leuhaupt, Lumerski, and Catherine, were present at the recital, and listened to it with interest, though they had heard it once before : and the feelings of the Baroness were powerfully affected, as Phedora, with simple grace, rehearsed the gradations of intimacy which succeeded to the mutual distrust and fear between Alexy and herself.

When

When she had ended her little narrative, Mrs. Lumerski reminded her that she had never attempted to inform them, since the first restriction of her father, of the occurrences that had befallen her from the time she left Narva and was brought to Moscow, and from the period of her separation from the Baroness, to that of her journey to Warsaw.

“And now, my dear Phedora,” said Catherine, “tell us by what miracle you were saved, when the Baroness supposed you had inevitably perished.”

“My soul shudders even yet,” exclaimed Madame Hartsen, “when I reflect upon the danger into which my impetuosity plunged this dear girl! never can the horror of it be effaced from my recollection—not even the fatal instant which gave to me the information of my child’s death, could exceed it in anguish.”

Phedora, to interrupt the self-reproaches of the Baroness, hastened to comply with the request of Mrs. Lumerski : but when she mentioned that she was preserved by a man of the name of Rubenski, Mr. Leuhaupt, who had hitherto listened with composed attention, started.

“ Ah, Catherine,” continued Phedora with animation, “ you would have been delighted with his mother, the good old Matheowna : she became very fond of me ; and when I sometimes observed her looking earnestly at me, she told me that I reminded her of some Count she had nursed.”

“ By what name did she call him ?” asked Mr. Leuhaupt, so eagerly, that the Baroness cast upon him a glance of surprise and enquiry.

“ I cannot remember it,” replied the unconscious narrator.

“ Endeavour to recall it, my dear child,” resumed the good man : “ was it——try to recall the name.”

“ I

“ I believe,” returned she, after a pause, “ it was Czerkowski.”

“ I supposed so !” exclaimed Mr. Leuhaupt with emotion.

“ Did you know him, my dear Sir ?” cried Phedora : “ if you could but convey to poor Matheowna any intelligence of him, it would make her forget her years, her poverty, and all her ills.”

“ I knew very little of him,” replied the good minister, after a moment of reflection, “ he is no more : his mother I very much esteemed.”

“ I was slightly acquainted with a Count Czerkowi twenty years back, when I first entered the army,” said the Baron ; “ but he had seen at least sixty winters at that time, and cannot be the person you speak of. I met him at Gorlitz, and I well remember he was said to be a Pole, though he seemed inclined to discredit the rumour. He suddenly disappeared from the habitation he occupied, and I do not recollect even to have heard his name mentioned since that period.”



“Proceed with your story, my dear Phedora,” said Mr. Leuhaupt, in a musing attitude, “and inform us how you were separated from those good people.”

“Will you not accuse me of temerity,” returned she, “and an imprudence not to be pardoned, when I tell you that I rejected the advice and entreaty of honest Rubenski, and quitted his mother and Ottokesa, without informing them of the step I meditated.—But my heart yearned towards those dear friends who thought I had departed from this world, and I could not endure to live far from you all, without a hope of ever seeing you more.”

She then continued her tale ; and when she had ended it, Mr. Leuhaupt enquired of the Baroness if she could describe the place where Phedora had been so cruelly severed from her, and to what towns it was most contiguous. Madame Hartfen gave him every intelligence her recollection would assist her with ; but Lumerski appeared much  
3 better

better acquainted with the country ; and from the information of Phedora respecting her route from the village of Rubenski to Mogiloff, he was enabled to satisfy the enquiries of Mr. Leuhaupt with tolerable exactness.

As the resentment of the Baroness, though violent, was never lasting, she was soon induced to pardon Bastina, whose anxiety and repentance nearly cost her her life : from this woman she learnt that her sister, the nurse of young Frederick, lived in Saxony, of which Madame Hartsen had been ignorant ; for the poor creature had always avoided the injured mother, and no person or thing which had in the least related to the lost child, was ever mentioned to the Baroness by her own express desire : nurse had therefore quitted her service, and returned with her husband to her native place, having previously refused the offered liberality of the Baron, because her conscience would not suffer her to

accept it ; a circumstance which at the time had much surpris'd him.

Old Charles was lately dead, and could not corroborate the confession of Bastina ; and though Madame Hartfen was firmly convinced of its truth, and of the identity of her child, she ardently longed to have it confirmed beyond a possibility of doubt, by his nurse, whom she wished to interrogate unknown to Bastina, that her replies might be wholly unprepared. She communicated this idea to the Baron, and he readily promised to accompany her himself into Saxony, if possible, immediately after the Emperor of Russia had visited Warsaw, where he was hourly expected.

This plan was imparted to Mr. Leuhaupt, who thought it extremely right, that on an affair so important, they should endeavour to obtain every satisfaction they could receive, without regarding those obstacles that might oppose their efforts.

The

The virtues and talents of this good man were contemplated with veneration both by the Baron and his lady, and they mutually wished him to become the preceptor of young Frederick, and accept under their roof a more certain asylum than Lumerski and his wife, however tender and generous, would be enabled to offer him. They were not tardy in making this proposal, which Mr. Leuhaupt readily embraced; and Catherine, having so lately received from her father a gentle lecture upon selfish regrets, heard the arrangement without repining, though not without a secret pang of filial sorrow, at losing a guest so beloved and so honoured.

In a few days Peter the Great entered Warsaw, accompanied by a numerous train of Polanders, attached to the interest of Augustus: but amongst these the Baron enquired in vain for the Count Rectzizi and his family. All the intelligence he could obtain of them, was comprised in the informa-

tion of their having left Lublin a week back, on their way to Warsaw. When he repeated this to Madame Hartfen and Mr. Leuhaupt, they agreed in supposing that Cassimir had met them on the road, and that his representation and entreaty, which they were entirely averse from complying with, had induced them to alter their destination, to avoid seeing Phedora, whom they could not but love and admire, whilst they resolved to blight her happiness, and doom their favourite son to misery, by withholding the consent he pleaded for. On the following day however, the Baron heard that the father of the Countess Rectzizi was dead, and had, by will, confirmed to his grandson Cassimir those possessions he had ever meant to bequeath him. Madame Hartfen then conjectured, that the news of his decease, meeting them in their route, had caused them to bend their steps towards Luthuania, where the parents of the Countess generally resided.

Mr.

Mr. Leuhaupt was much disappointed at not seeing them at Warsaw, and lamented the circumstance with a warmth of regret he seldom allowed himself to display. Phedora too, felt an increase of dejection, on learning that Cassimir was now possessed of wealth so far beyond what she could without presumption have aspired to share with him as his wife, had she even been the daughter of Baron Hartsen; how infinitely then was the beloved Rectzizi above her, poor and obscure as she actually was!

Some unforeseen occurrences having prevented Augustus from meeting his ally at Warsaw, Peter the Great proceeded to Thera, after remaining a few days at the capital. But before he left the place, he gave Baron Hartsen permission to accompany his lady into Saxony.

Mr. Leuhaupt, considering that his presence in this expedition could not be of any service to his new friends, and as he perceived the uneasiness of his daughter, lest she should be deprived of his society and that of Phedora,

dora at the same moment, he determined to remain with her until the return of the Hartfens to Warsaw. The Baroness discovered from Bastina that her sister lived with her husband at a village near Elstra, thirty miles north of Dresden : and to this place, having taken an affectionate leave of Mr. Leuhaupt, Lumerki and Catherine, the Baron and his lady, with Frederick and his favourite Phedora, bent their course, leaving Bastina at Warsaw ; and another female domestic, entirely unacquainted with the events which had lately happened, was hired to attend the Baroness.

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CHAP. IV.

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- “ The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate ;  
“ Our understanding traces them in vain,  
“ Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search ;  
“ Nor sees with how much art the windings run,  
“ Nor where the regular confusion ends.”

THE summer, though far advanced, was uncommonly warm ; but no inconvenience could arrest the progress of Madame Hartfen, who appeared particularly impatient to hear the narrative she meant to draw from the nurse of her Frederick. It would, she said, leave her mind wholly unembarrassed, and without any room for the slightest suspicion of deceit, which she confessed she should at present be quite unable to endure, without the loss either of her senses or her life, so entirely was her soul wrapped up in her recovered child. The Baron, dreading the

the consequence of a disappointment upon a subject of such importance, endeavoured to prepare her for the possibility of meeting one, by suggesting that nurse might be dead, or if living, too much shocked and terrified by the consciousness of her fault, to avow it to the face of a person she had so highly injured.

“ Of that I shall judge,” replied Madame Hartfen ; “ but I think the very consciousness you speak of, will induce an immediate confession when she finds herself suspected ; I hope so at least, for then I shall be completely happy ; nor could the sneering incredulity of the whole world then ever give me a moment of pain.”

Frederick could ill bear the restraint of his confinement to the carriage : he was restless and impatient during the journey, and his mother saw, or fancied she saw in his countenance, a peculiar wildness when they approached a grove or a wood. The Baron, whose

whose affection and feelings were not so delicate as hers, did not experience the pain that assailed her heart, when she communicated this remark to him: on the contrary his curiosity was excited to know in what manner the child would be affected, were he to be taken to the recesses of a forest, where every object must remind him of habits he could scarcely yet have forgotten, young as he was.

At length his importunities overcame the reluctance of the Baroness, and on entering a considerable wood near the confines of Saxony, he persuaded her to alight from her carriage, and lead their son into it. Madam Hartfen insisted however, that Frederick should be attached to her by a strong ligament, that would only permit him to run a few steps from her; and even when this precaution was used, the apprehensive mother held his hand fast locked in hers, nor could all his entreaty or eager efforts to obtain his liberty prevail. The Baron walked  
by

by his side, watching his countenance, which as the shades deepened round him, betrayed emotions that marked a lively remembrance of similar scenes. He started when any tree struck his attentions, that bore the traces of age more strongly than the rest, and would then survey himself, his parents, and Phedora, with an eager gaze: but they could not induce him, by repeated questions, to speak a word. When the party had walked some time, the path became wilder, and Phedora pointed to a spot that reminded her of one of the haunts of little Frederick in Minkki forest: he had observed it too, and with a sudden motion freed his hands, which he struck together, uttering a cry almost as wild and discordant as that Phedora had heard when she first beheld him.

The Baroness shuddered, and turning to her husband, "Why would you, exclaimed she, in a voice of anguish, "give me such a shock as this? Lead this poor babe away, and never again let the unhappy state in  
which

which his infancy was passed, be recalled to my mind."

The Baron, who had not expected an effect so unwished for, from his experiment, readily complied, and the party returned to the carriage. It was two days before Madame Hartfen recovered from the discomposure this incident had given her, and then a new source of inquietude arose on her arrival at Elstra. Here she learnt that Frederick's nurse had quitted the village with her husband above a year; for having been reduced by extreme poverty, the man had then enlisted in the army of Augustus, and his wife followed his fortunes.

The Baron, dreading the consequence of this intelligence to the mother of his darling child, went himself to the village, and by a very strict enquiry, found that the unhappy couple had remained a considerable time at Dreiden, and when last their fellow villagers had heard of them, they were still  
there

there. The hopes of Madame Hartfen then revived, and after resting a night at Elstra, the party sat off the following day for the Saxon capital.

Phedora, careless on her own account where they went, or what difficulties they encountered, yet felt herself much interested in the success of her friend's wishes: but every object that met her eye was, to her, tasteless and devoid of beauty; and the countries she traversed had no attractions to engage her attention. The Baroness saw with inquietude the dejection of her spirits; in vain did she endeavour, at intervals, to forget the object she so eagerly pursued, to enliven her absent companion, by her wonted sallies of vivacity, and in vain did little Frederick caress her with expressions of fondness:—though she was still gentle and patient, she could no more recall the smiles of peace to her countenance, when peace itself was banished from her heart.

Immediately

Immediately on arriving at Dresden, the Baron, without allowing himself a moment of rest, made personal enquiries for the people he sought, and to his inexpressible mortification, discovered that the regiment in which the husband of poor nurse had enlisted, was then upon duty at Koningstein, whither it had hastily marched not above a week before. When the Baroness was informed of this, she began to despair of being able to gratify the earnest wish she had formed: it was become only the more uncontrollable, from the obstacles she had met with, and the united influence of the Baron and Phedora could scarcely induce her to remain a few hours at Dresden, though she was nearly exhausted by anxiety and fatigue.

“ One step more,” cried she, resisting the importunity of her husband, to induce her to repose herself a few days, “ one step more, and we shall, I hope, be successful: when my impatient heart is satisfied, I can then, and only then, think of rest.”

As



As the Baron knew it was necessary to obtain an order from the governor of Dresden, to gain admittance at the fortress of Koningstein, he would not neglect what might be essentially necessary to an immediate communication with nurse's husband : with some little difficulty he therefore procured one ; and yielding to the impatience of his lady, instantly resumed their journey.

“ Now then,” exclaimed he, on turning out of the road from Pirna, and approaching Koningstein, “ we shall soon, I trust, find this woman !”

Phedora very sincerely joined in the wish ; for she could not behold the emotions that agitated Madame Hartsen, with the same insensibility she regarded almost every thing that passed within her observation.

The Baron, having fixed them in the first habitable dwelling that presented itself to his notice, near the foot of the rock on which  
the

the castle stands, hastened up the steep ascent, to enquire for the regiment to which Stabinsk, the husband of poor nurse, belonged. It was actually upon duty there, as he had been informed at Dresden, and with very little difficulty the man was presented to him. He started when he beheld the Baron, whose person was well known to him, with a confusion so manifest, that the truth of Bastina's report was confirmed to the anxious father beyond a doubt. He immediately desired to see the wife of Stabinsk, and was led to the wretched hole, where poor nurse, with a conscience she could never still, was doing penance for the unhappy moment of neglect which had cost her so dear. The complicated misery of want, of pining regret, and bitter recollection, had worn her almost to a skeleton, and her husband, who looked almost equally meagre and forlorn, silently introduced the Baron to the partner of his misfortunes, with looks of apprehension that confirmed him in the opinion he most wished to cherish. Without allow-

ing them time to form any evasive tale, or to consult together, he bade the woman, in a tone of authority, to follow him: his voice, which she immediately recognized, for her eyes had not so quickly distinguished his form, almost annihilated every faculty; she uttered a loud scream, and sunk down from the stool on which she was sitting.

“ I did not seek you,” said the Baron, whilst her husband raised her from the ground, “ for a purpose you need fear; believe me you have nothing to apprehend from accompanying me only an hundred paces from hence: on the contrary, you will have reason to rejoice in a ready compliance with my request.”

Stabinski now exhorted his wife to obey the Baron; but he was compelled to support her faltering steps as she followed him out of the hovel. He turned back several times to encourage the wretched pair to hasten, for the woman was so much dismayed  
and

and terrified, that she could scarcely move, even with the assistance of her husband, and never did the moments appear to the poor Baron to creep so slowly, as those in which partly by persuasion, by threat and entreaty, he drew these conscience-stricken beings into the presence of Madame Hartsen, who sent Frederick out of the way whilst she interrogated his nurse.

The instant the woman caught a glimpse of her, she was seized with a panic so great, that only the inability of darting away to hide herself, could have prevented her from doing it. She trembled violently, and in an agony which took from her the knowledge of what she was uttering, implored mercy, and promised to confess her guilt.

“ I take you at your word,” said the Baroness, in a tremor almost equal to that of the culprit, “ what is it you would confess. But observe nurse, that you strictly

H 2

adhere

adhere to the truth, or I may show you that I am better informed than you may imagine."

"Bastina then," exclaimed she, "or old Charles have betrayed me: or perhaps Heaven was angered at all the lies I told, and all the false things old Charles made me pretend."

"Tell me what these were," said the Baroness, "without hesitation."

The poor nurse then related the same story Bastina had before discovered to her mistress, and as it strictly agreed in every particular with the previous confession of her sister, her auditors were perfectly satisfied that she had adhered to the facts as they had happened. The extreme delight which shone in the eyes of Madame Hartsen, as she listened to circumstances which the poor woman expected would wound her to the soul, almost staggered her belief that she saw right, and she concluded that either her own senses were disordered, or those of the Baroness deranged, from the agony her narrative

tive had given her. With this idea, she remained when she had ended it, with her eyes averted from her injured mistress, expecting every instant a signal punishment from the avenging fury of the Baron : instead of which, the accents of Madame Hartsen, in a tone that announced more of compassion than anger, interrupted the silence that had ensued.

“ I forgive you, nurse,” said she, “ the more readily, because I cannot but observe, that however faulty you may have been, you appear to have had a sincere affection for the poor child.”

“ God and all the saints witness for me,” replied nurse, “ that from the moment in which the dear babe was lost from my cursed neglect, I have never had a peaceful hour : and from that time to this, I hardly ever close my eyes, that I don’t see him, sweet child ! almost devoured by the animal that took him away.”

"Be composed," said the Baroness, "and I will give you comfort."

"No, no, Madam, you can give me none," cried nurse; "for though you forgive me, I shall always be unhappy."

"But suppose I could tell you," resumed Madame Hartsen, "that my little Frederick found in the desolate place, in which it was his fate to spend the first years of his childhood, a more careful attendant than yourself?"

"Oh, Jesus be praised!" cried nurse, in violent emotion: then dropping her eyes, which had been raised to Heaven, and perceiving a smile on the countenance of her lady, her heart misgave her. Oh, Madam (added she) do not deceive me! yes indeed, God knows, he might easily find one more careful than I, but not in that place."

"Even there," said the Baroness, more seriously, "Heaven watched over him, and for the protection and support of his helpless infancy, provided adequate means: but what they were, Heaven itself only knows, unless



unless we may conjecture that in its mercy, it inspired with compassion the very beast which seized upon the poor babe as its prey."

"And is the dear—dear child alive?" asked nurse with a look of wild surprise.

"Our Frederick is alive!" exclaimed the Baron, who could no longer remain silent "and at this moment in the house.

This sudden intelligence overcame the weak frame of the woman, and she fell into the arms of her husband, entirely without sensation. Madame Hartsen blamed the precipitancy of the Baron, and with much humanity assisted Phedora to recover the nurse, who on regaining her recollection, eagerly entreated to see the sweet babe "and then," added she, "I shall die in peace."

Phedora, on receiving permission from his mother, instantly flew to fetch little Frederick, and the agitation of poor nurse, whilst she was absent, was inexpressibly painful.—At length, when Phedora re-appeared with him, the woman quite speechless, gazed at

the boy with an air of mixed wonder and incredulity, until collecting her scattered senses, she approached him, and not without opposition on his part, hastily turned over the hair that grew on the back of his head: on seeing the well-remembered lock, she screamed, and acted a thousand extravagancies: as soon as she could be removed from the presence of Frederick, the Baroness, with repeated assurances of forgiveness, consigned her for the present to the care of her woman, whilst Stabinski, who participated in the joy of the discovery, was obliged to return to the castle to relieve guard.

“ I not only pardon that poor creature,” said Madame Hartsen, when nurse had withdrawn, “ but I can even pity her sufferings; because I am persuaded, from every circumstance, that her fondness for the child was such as I ever supposed it to be: but as for that specious old Charles, in whom we both so much confided, were he living, I  
know

know not how far I might carry my resentment."

"Let it be buried with him," said the Baron: "and since we are restored to such unhoped for felicity, let us endeavour to make nurse and her husband participate in it in some degree: we must try to procure his discharge, and take them into our service."

Phedora approved this generous proposal with a smile of complacency which Madame Hartsen well understood.

"Our little Rubenski," said she, "gives a silent vote for your plan, and I am far from being averse from it: if these poor people are willing that it should be so, the sooner we make them comfortable, the more acceptable will be the kindness."

The Baron assented, and indefatigable in his pursuits, immediately followed Stabinfk to the castle, to learn if he was desirous of

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leaving

leaving the service ; and if he found him so, to speak to his officers upon the subject.

Though his mind was occupied in the contemplation of his own happiness and that of the Baroness, and though he felt extremely eager to promote that of two people, who had suffered misery from the same cause which had inflicted it on himself, he could not gaze at the fortress to which he was ascending, without a painful emotion, nor think of the last moments of Patkul,\* the ill-fated Livonian, without a sigh.

“ The same sovereign,” thought the Baron, “ who can calmly view his subjects, reluctantly dragged to the field of battle, and slaughtered by thousands to satisfy an outrageous and senseless ambition, could as well to satisfy a personal pique, employ his hand to minute down the tortures it pleased him

\* Patkul was confined in this fortress, from whence he was delivered up to the King of Sweden, and afterwards broke upon the wheel. Vide Histories of Sweden and Russia.

him to inflict on one wretched individual. Yet the action was peculiarly base, savage, and unmanly !”

Michael Stabinsk, the husband of poor nurse, was upon guard in the castle ; and the Baron was directed, through a variety of windings and turnings, to seek him in the interior of the building : having puzzled himself in endeavouring to recollect the instructions he had received, he at length came up with a centinel, who on hearing that he wished to speak with his comrade Michael, accompanied him to the extent of his walk for a small piece of money, and passed him to the next centry. In this manner he reached Stabinsk, who was walking to and fro in a corridor, with evident marks of distress in his countenance. The Baron could not forbear enquiring into the cause of a change so remarkably conspicuous ; for when Michael had left his house, the impression of joy and delight was imprinted upon his features with equal force.

“ Ah, my worthy General,” replied Stabinsk, after having performed a military salute in honour of the Baron, “ at this moment I feel how hard it is to be a foldier, and have the heart of a peasant.”

“ Of what inconvenience is it to you just now ?” asked the Baron, smiling at the distinction.

“ As we stand here,” replied Michael, “ I can hardly hear the young lady sobbing ; but further on, near the door of the cell, I can hear it just as plain as I hear the sound of my own steps : and I had rather be flogged than stand centinel here.”

“ Who is this young lady ?” demanded the Baron, with some degree of interest.

“ I would not venture to answer that question to any man but General Hartsen,” returned Stabinsk ; “ and indeed I only know it by accident. The young lady in that cell is with her mother ; and when first our regiment mounted guard in the castle, the father was with them : but a few days ago he was removed to another division, and

his wife, when he was taken from her, in her grief and fright, mentioned his name, though it seems they had all been forbidden to discover it."

"You heard it then," said the Baron;  
"what was it?"

"Rectzizi," replied Michael, in a low voice.

The Baron started, and repeated the word.  
"Softly, my lord Baron," said the soldier, looking fearfully up the corridor towards the neighbouring centinel, "softly! I have never ventured to tell any of my comrades what I heard."

The Baron walked hastily to the door of the cell Michael had pointed to when he mentioned the young lady's sobs: suddenly stopping however, before he reached it, "No," said he, musing, "it may injure them."

Then desiring Stabinsk to return to him the moment he was relieved, he passed with quick steps up the corridor, quitting the  
castle



castle wholly forgetful of the errand on which he had entered it. On reaching his lodgings, he found the Baronefs in her apartment unaccompanied by Phedora, and related the alarming intelligence he had gathered from Michael. She stood aghast on hearing it, scarcely crediting the tale: and when the Baron required her advice and assistance in forming a plan for the release of their friends, it was some minutes ere she could sufficiently collect her spirits to make a reply. Before they had determined upon any point, excepting to keep the afflicting news for the present from the knowledge of Phedora, Michael re-appeared. He was asked if he could guess, or in the least suspect the cause of Count Rectzizi's disgrace; and replied in the negative.

"Does the governor converse with him, or treat him with respect?" demanded the Baron.

"I believe he has not seen him," returned Stabinsk more than once, from the time he

was

was first escorted with his wife and daughter to the fort."

"Were they accompanied by a son of the Count?" Michael did not know.

"What are we to think of this?" said Madame Hartfen; "I am well convinced that they are wholly in the interest of Augustus; and why their attachment should be thus repayed, is incomprehensible."

"This disaster may be occasioned by some imprudence or defection of the young Count," observed the Baron: "Stabinsk," continued he, "I much esteem and respect these prisoners; are you willing to assist my endeavours to serve them?"

Michael zealously professed his readiness to lay down his life, if it would be of any use either to the Baron or his lady, and touched, with thankful gratitude, upon their generous goodness to his poor wife, whom they had relieved from misery almost insupportable.

"Can

"Can you not speak to the Count or Countess?" resumed the Baron.

"Not without some hazard of detection," said Stabinsk; "but I would go any length, or run any risk, to obey your commands.—Tell me therefore what you would have me do, and that I will attempt, though the bayonets of every man in the corps should oppose me."

He spoke with an energy that convinced both Madame Hartfen and her husband of his willingness to execute their injunctions.

"I am doubly averse to your risking a discovery," said the Baron, "both on your own account and that it would infallibly injure those we wish to serve. When do you again mount guard in the castle? If you could then contrive, without being overheard by your comrades, to inform the Count that I am at Konigstein, and ask in my name, by what strange occurrence he is  
thus

thus confined, that is all at present I wish to require of you."

"It shall be done," replied Michael, "but it may be a week first, or perhaps only three or four days: for you know, my worthy General, it is a chance if I am so soon at that particular post." The Baron assented.

"We must then have patience," said Madame Hartfen: "I am certain that we need not caution you, Stabinsk," added she, "to be secret in general: but you may not be aware that we have particular reasons for wishing to preserve what you have discovered to us, from the knowledge of the young person you saw with me this morning. You must not therefore speak of your progress in this affair whilst she is present."

Michael promised to recollect this, and he was then dismissed to receive some refreshment, as his noon-day meal, which his wife generally carried to him in the castle yard, had been forgotten by her, in the commotion she had been in. The Baron and his lady renewed

renewed their conjectures concerning this strange imprisonment, and concluded by avowing themselves wholly unable to ascertain any probable cause for it. They communicated to Michael their intentions of relieving him from the misfortune of being a soldier, whilst he still retained the heart of a peasant ; and his eagerness to accomplish his commission encreased with this proof of the kindness of his patrons.

Phedora was not so wholly occupied by her pensive reflections, but that she perceived the Baron and Madame Hartsen were agitated by some concern of moment ; but as they were silent upon it, contrary to the usual confidence they reposed in her, she would not suffer herself to betray any curiosity upon the subject. An accident discovered to her however, the unpleasant circumstance that was meant to be hidden from her knowledge whilst it wore an aspect so alarming. The second day after their arrival at Konigstein, little Frederick, as usual, was teasing her

her to play with him ; and having succeeded in pulling her to the ground, threw his father's military cloak over her, enjoining her to silence, because the Baroness was at this moment entering the apartment with his father, and he meant to surprise them.

Madame Hartfen, not perceiving Phedora, who was shadowed by a table, continued her conversation with the Baron, and unconsciously revealed enough to alarm her extremely. She started up in an agony of apprehension.

“ Explain to me what you mean,” exclaimed she, “ by those dreadful words *imprisonment, and our poor friends the Rectzizis!* What has happened to them?—Tell me all, dearest Baroness, and do not heighten my terrors by further concealment !”

“ Since you have surprised half the secret, my good Phedora,” returned Madame Hartfen, “ I shall be compelled, unwillingly I own, to give you the rest : but I must first condition

condition with you not to suffer this cloud, which will quickly blow over I hope, to reduce your spirits, already too much depressed."

Phedora readily promised, and the Baroness shook her head with an air of incredulity: but she imparted to her the situation of the Count Rectzizi, his Countess, and Ulmeri.

"Oh Heaven! am I so near them," exclaimed Phedora, "and cannot fly to testify my respect and affection? Imprisoned!—Perhaps without attendants—without those indulgencies, become indispensable from long habit. Oh that I could but alleviate, in the smallest degree, the horrors of confinement! Can I not see them, dearest Baroness—can I not, for one moment, embrace my poor Ulmeri?"

"No," replied Madame Hartsen, "this cannot be done: yet you may be assured, my sweet Phedora, that the Baron will not leave any method untried to afford them succour



succour now, and obtain their liberty when he returns to Warsaw."

"Must you then return to Warsaw, and leave them here?" asked Phedora in an agony.

"I fear we inevitably must," replied the Baron; "since they can only be released by the same hand that deprived them of liberty: when I know of what offence they are accused, I will either, by clearing up their innocence, or by intercession, endeavour to restore them to freedom and safety."

"What they are accused of cannot surely be unknown," exclaimed Phedora with surprise.

Nothing is more frequently the case," said he; "in such a revolution as the Poles have experienced, a jealousy is conceived of many families, whose intentions are perhaps entirely harmless: every motion is watched with wary suspicion, and some action wholly innocent in itself, is constructed into treason and rebellion: by an overstrained caution, their persons are seized before the sequel can  
develope

develope the mistake, and as the presumption of their guilt is unsupported by sufficient proof, they disappear, and without accusation suffer, in a long and close confinement, all the horrors which criminals are subject to."

" Oh why is it so," cried Phedora, " why is injustice thus triumphant ?"

The Baron shook his head.—" Can you not," continued she, " enquire of those who guard the Count and Countess what is their supposed crime ?"

" I have already suggested," said Madame Hartsen, " that the most immediate and probable method of gaining information, would be to apply to the governor of the fort, but the Baron tells me it would be attended with consequences I am not aware of: yet still, if the means we are now trying fail, he is resolved to run some hazard to serve our friends."

This he immediately confirmed, and added, that it was extremely essential he should

know if the Count was conscious of having committed any imprudence, by discovering a partiality to the falling party in Poland.

“ Stabinsk is to give me notice,” said he, “ when he again stands centinel in the corridor leading to the cells where the Rectzizis are confined. I fear, from the strictness with which they are guarded, the affair is serious ; and I imagine it was only in consideration of the military habit I wear, that I was permitted to penetrate to the place where I found Michael.”

“ I would I could see them,” repeated Phedora mournfully sighing.

“ My dear young friend, you must be patient,” said the Baroness ; “ at present it is impossible that your wish should be gratified.”

Phedora endeavoured to obey this injunction, but found herself unable to banish one moment from her imagination, the benevolent Rectzizis confined in the cells of a prison

prison. With the nurse of Frederick she was very high in favour, from having rescued him from his savage state, and been the means of restoring him to his parents ; and next to the family of the Baron, she loved and revered Phedora : to nurse then she applied for assistance to execute a plan her grateful affection for the Count and Countess made her resolve to hazard. She induced her, by the most earnest entreaties, accompanied with tears, to procure the habit of a young Polish Peasant, and when Michael sent by one of his comrades, such a message to his wife as had been previously agreed upon, to signify that he was upon guard on the desired spot, the Baron flew eagerly to the castle, and Phedora as hastily attired herself in the disguise she had secured ; then stealing out of the house, accompanied by Michael's wife, she made the best of her way to the fort, at the risk of meeting Baron Hartsen.—Stabinsk had been advised of her design, which was to be presented to him by nurse

as

as his brother's daughter, just arrived at Konigstein.

When they entered the castle-yard, Michael's comrades surrounded them, some as they asserted to greet his wife, whom they had not seen for several days, and others without any motive but the apparent one of gazing at the beautiful peasant girl that accompanied her.

"Don't keep me here," said nurse, half angry, "but tell me where my husband is : here is his niece come to see him from Ostrosow."

She was told that he had mounted guard. "I suppose so," cried she ; "but this poor child wants to see him so much ! Can't we just go and speak a word to him ?"

"You must have patience," said an old serjeant ; " 'till the fellow is relieved."

"The saints defend us," exclaimed nurse, "telling a young soul now, to have patience !"

Some of the men laughed, and the serjeant walked off with a terrific frown.

“Shall I not see—see my uncle now then?” asked Phedora anxiously.

“Come this way,” said one of Michael’s comrades, in a low voice, “and I will show you where he stands.”

Her heart leapt at these words, and with a thankful smile she accompanied the soldier, followed by nurse, who was scarcely less pleased than her young companion to be freed from the rude examination they had undergone. After passing some courts, they came to long arch-ways that admitted very little light, and Phedora shuddered on reflecting upon what had been the feelings of Ulmeri, when she was conducted through them, unknowing when she should again repass from this dreary looking abode.

At length, on turning suddenly upon a descent of three or four steps, the soldier

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pointed

pointed to them, and in a whisper bade Phedora be cautious of falling, and not to speak, extending the last injunction to nurse : but the first was uttered in so low a tone, that it was not heard, and Phedora, not observing the steps, fell down them with a force of sound that echoed through all the windings they had passed.

“ What the devil is the matter ! ” cried a voice very near the spot ; and instantly a door opening, discovered the disconcerted party to an officer whose apartment the soldier had been desirous of passing without being heard.

“ Who are these women ? What are you doing here ? ” were questions the man expected, and was not disappointed in receiving : and whilst nurse, who was frightened out of her senses, assisted Phedora to rise, he ventured to say that the poor young girl, who had tumbled down, was just come to Konigstein, and going away directly, and



wanted to see one of his comrades, her uncle, who was upon duty a little further on.

“A young girl!” repeated the officer, “is she hurt? bring her here.”

Phedora, sick with pain and apprehension, for she was bruised by the fall, was supported by nurse and the soldier into the apartment from whence the unwelcome enquirer had issued, and when he beheld the features of the fair sufferer, he became very assiduous for her recovery. Phedora, ardently wishing to escape his further notice, exerted herself to suppress what she felt, and declaring that she was now quite well, thanked the officer for his humanity, and rose to depart.

“Whom do you wish to see?” said he, detaining her.

This interrogation confounded the trembling Phedora, for she had not heard the soldier explain the motive of her coming, and

imagined the real one was suspected. She blushed deeply a momentary crimson, and not immediately replying, nurse informed the officer that she came to the castle to see Michael Stabinsk, of the second regiment of Saxon foot guards.

“ But you are not leaving Konigstein to-day,” resumed he : “ surely you will stay and see your uncle promoted ? I shall get him a halbert soon.”

Phedora knew not what to reply, or how to get over the soldier’s mistake of her hasty departure from Konigstein : nurse however, again relieved her embarrassment, by saying, that if Michael came to such good fortune, his niece should stay to give him joy of it.”

“ That is well,” returned the officer :—  
“ I shall take care of him, depend upon it : you need not see him then till he comes off guard !”

“ I have a message to deliver to him,” said Phedora, with a second blush, and he-

fitating extremely, "and I must carry back an answer."

"And where do you live?" interrupted he, turning to nurse; "is this pretty girl your daughter?"

"No, please you, she is my husband's niece."

"Oh! Stabinski, is your husband—well, you may go and exchange a word with him, but you must be sure to come away before he is relieved—you are not to be seen with him, mind you, whilst he is upon duty;—and—stay—hasten back, and let me speak with you as you go by."

Phedora assented; for she was delighted, on any terms, to be suffered to escape, as she began to fancy that the curiosity of this tormenting man, would supply him with questions that could not be answered, before the purport of her disguise was completely frustrated. The soldier, who had retired into the lobby, when he observed that his officer addressed no further interrogation to him,

was

was now called upon to resume his office of conductor, and without any more accident, they reached the passage where Michael was stationed.

“Where is he?” exclaimed Phedora, whilst the colour varied in her face.

“Have patience,” returned the soldier, entirely forgetting the remark nurse had made a quarter of an hour before, “have patience, and we shall encounter him presently.”

“If he is in this passage, I will fly to him directly,” cried she, and darted forward with swiftness, regardless of the questions the sentinels put to her as she passed, until the glittering of a bayonet, barring her progress, stopped her.

“What do you seek here?” said a rough voice.

“My uncle Michael Stabinsk!” replied she, out of breath with impatience.

“Is that all! why don’t you wait till he goes to the *corps-de-garde*?”

"I am quitting Konigstein directly," returned Phedora trembling, "and I wish to see him before I go."

"Where do you come from?"

"Oh do not detain me, I shall be too late!" exclaimed she. "Well, well, go then; but don't be long, or I shall come for you."

With this courtly permission, she again proceeded, and in two moments saw Michael, who was anxiously waiting the appearance of the Baron or Phedora. He scarcely knew her in her disguise, though the extreme beauty of her countenance was yet very striking.

"Where are they, good Stabinsk," said she in an eager whisper, "how can I speak to them?"

He led her, without losing a moment, to a low door, hardly discernible from the gloom that pervaded the corridor, and directing

recting her to place her mouth close to the lock, and speak in a low and distinct voice, he retired to watch at some distance, having agreed upon a signal, should he hear any one coming, at which she was to break off any conversation with the prisoners, and hasten towards him. Stabinsk imagined that his wife had engaged the neighbouring centinels in conversation, which was indeed the fact; and she had likewise detained the foldier who had conducted her, that Michael and his niece, she said, might talk over their family a bit.

Phedora, following the instructions of Stabinsk, called gently to Ulmeri, and instantly heard an exclamation from within.

“Baron Hartfen,” continued she hastily, “wishes to be informed of the reason of your confinement?”

“Who tells us this?” asked a voice she knew to be that of the Countess.

"Answer me quickly, I conjure you!" said Phedora.

"We know not," replied the prisoner, "why we are thus confined."

"Can the Count guess," resumed the trembling interrogator.

"He is as unconscious of the meaning of it as we are—but say, who is it that appears thus to take an interest in our fate?"

"It is your Rubenski," replied she, "who would die to liberate you."

Phedora then heard her name repeated in accents of wonder and incredulity; but at this instant Michael gave the signal, and she was compelled to run to him.

The sentinel, who had so roughly interrupted her progress, had kept his promise in coming to seek her, and she could not have rejoined Michael time enough to have eluded his suspicions, had not nurse at the same moment, walked up the corridor, accompanied by the soldier, whom she could



no longer prevent from rejoining Phedora, and her voice warned Stabinsk that he must call to his fair niece.

“ Well,” cried nurse, turning to her new relation, “ we must get away ; so you can’t have any more chat now.”

“ Did not I tell you, young woman,” said the surly centinel, “ that this was no place for you to stay in. ? What the devil ! I suppose nothing will serve you next, but you must come a chattering when we are drawn up before the governor.”

Michael and the other foldier expostulated with him upon his ill-humoured severity, but with little effect, and Phedora, accompanied by nurse, hurried away much grieved, that she had not been able to exchange another sentence with the beloved prisoners. She knew not if the Baron had been equally or more successful than herself, and was surprised, on recollection, that she had not seen him throughout her whole  
I 6 expedition,

expedition, from which she augured that he had been compelled to forego his design.— She had however, the consolation of thinking that her friends were not confined for any indiscretion of magnitude ; for she knew the Countess too well not to be certain that she would not so positively have denied any consciousness of the cause of their imprisonment, had not the fact been so : prudence indeed might have induced her to be silent, but prudence with her, Phedora was well assured, would never degenerate into falsehood.

The soldier, who still accompanied nurse and her fair charge, failed not to remind them of their promise of calling at the apartment of the officer to speak with him before they left the castle. Phedora would willingly have excused herself from paying this visit, but there was no retreating from the assent she had given. When they reached the spot where the accident had happened, the soldier tapped for admittance.

"I hope," said he in a low voice, "he is gone to the governor, who always visits the cells of the prisoners once a week; and I believe it is to-day that he goes round."

After waiting a few minutes, and repeating the signal "It is surely so," added he; "will you stay till he comes back? You shall wait in the guard-house, if you will?"

"No, no," cried Phedora, "I cannot remain any longer—I must be gone."

Well, but you won't go away from Konigstein," said the soldier, "so soon as you thought for?"

"I do not know—fare you well; I thank you for your civility in conducting us to my uncle."

"Oh, as to that," returned he, "I would do any good turn for one of Stabinsk's kindred: but you are not going away from Konigstein to-day, are you?"

"We will talk of that another time," said nurse, "let us be gone now, because we are in haste."

They

They had now attained the outward court, and when the soldier had accompanied them as far as he dared to venture, he still called out as they hurried from him, "Surely you are not going from Konigstein to-day!"

"The man is crazy," said nurse in a pet, "what business is it of his whether you are going or not? He is very inquisitive, surely!"

The Baron was already returned; and Phedora found both him and his lady in great consternation at her sudden disappearance, notwithstanding their inquietude had been rather allayed on learning that she was attended by nurse. Madame Hartsen, who had watched for her return, knew her in her disguise, even at some distance, and with equal quickness guessed the reason of her having assumed it. Before Phedora could speak, "You have been," exclaimed she, "to the castle; but I fear you have failed!"

"Not entirely," replied she, timidly;—"yet I grieve that I could not be quite as fortunate as I had hoped."

The

The Baron was as eager as his lady, to hear what she had learnt, and Phedora immediately gratified them : when her little narrative was ended, " My charming Phedora," cried he, " I had not the passport nature has given you, that of an all-subduing loveliness ; and instead of being ushered forward with such complaisant attention, I was detained even from the first court with a variety of questions, I imagine I answered very ill, for I was denied any communication with Stabinsk until he was relieved, and not having any knowledge of the expedient you have practised with a courage and dexterity I admire, I supposed I had no alternative to gain the intelligence I wanted but that of applying immediately, and in my own name, to the governor. The title of General to the Emperor procured me a ready audience ; and when the apartment was cleared of the officers who attended him, I demanded to know for what offence Count Rectzizi, his wife and daughter, were confined in the castle. The countenance of the governor underwent

underwent a change at this interrogation, and after a thoughtful pause, "Your question," returned he, "surprises me Baron, because I am at a loss to know by what means you have discovered the circumstance you mention."

"I told him it was by an accident I would not take up his time and my own in relating at that moment, and urged him to answer my enquiry.

'Pardon me,' interrupted he, "if I observe to you, that I have positive orders to arrest every person who appears so peculiarly anxious to learn that particular."

'Beware,' returned I, "of offering an insult to the Czar my master, in my person."

'It is to that consideration,' said he, 'you owe your freedom the next hour: for I know the King esteems the friendship of the Emperor too highly, to risk the loss of it upon grounds that are not of the first importance: you will oblige me however, by quitting Konigstein without delay—I hope this hint will be sufficient.'

"I

"I expostulated," continued the Baron, "upon this half-expressed command: he apologized for the necessity he found himself under of giving me such an intimation, but would not retract it. I returned in a very ill-humour, and having told my story to the Baroness, and enquired for you to inform you of our compelled departure, we discovered your evasion.

"Upon my soul," added he, turning to Madame Hartsen, "our little Rubenski looks more than usually lovely in that dress."

"It was for that reason, I suppose," replied the Baroness, "she chose it, in order to subdue the whole *corps-de-garde*; and you find she did not judge amiss."

"Ah! Madam," cried Phedora, "do not rally me at this moment, when I hear you are obliged to leave our friends subjected to the horrors of a prison."

"They shall not long remain so," said the Baron: "from the assertion of the Countess Rectzizi, I imagine they are confined upon some groundless jealousy. The instant we  
return



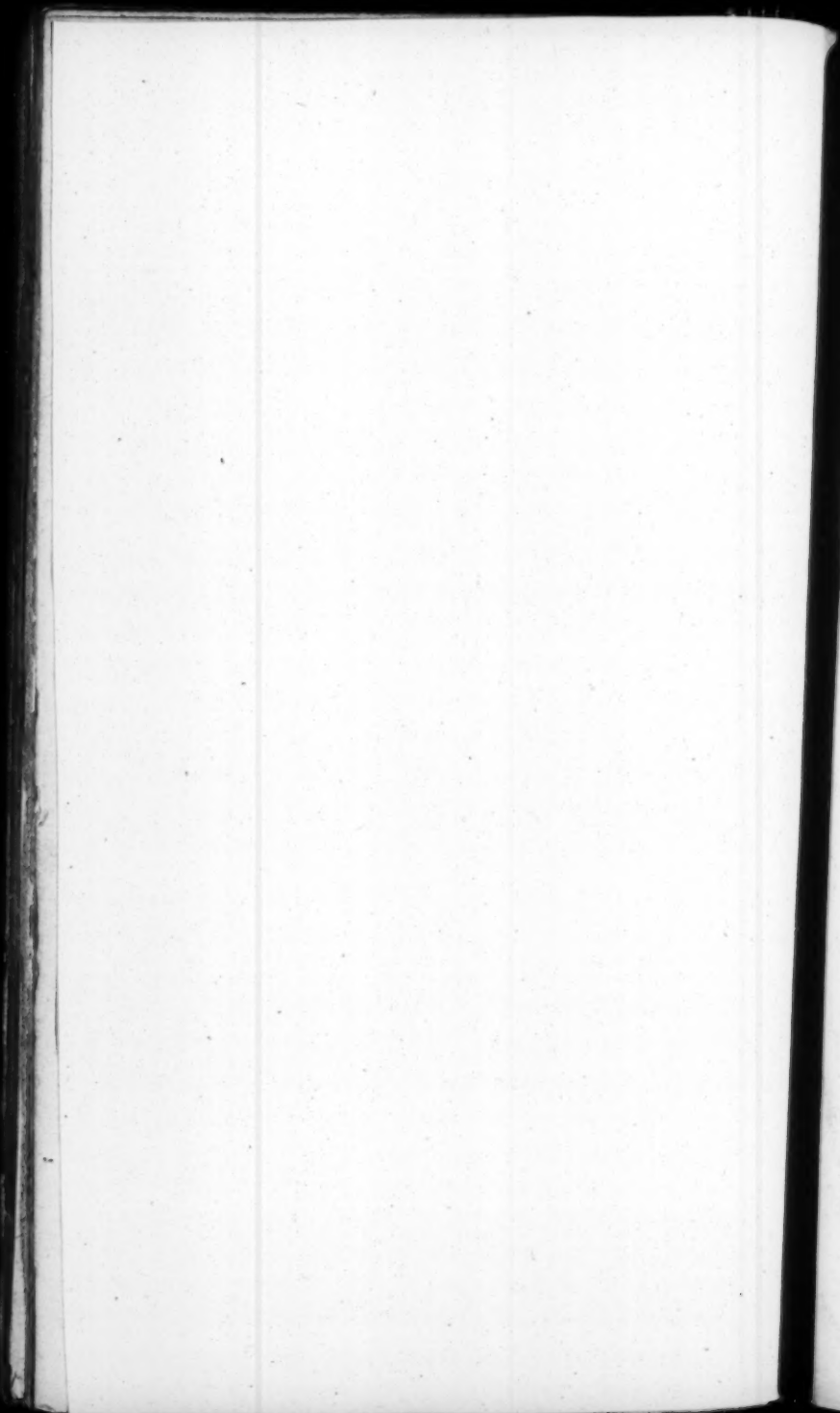
return to Warsaw, I will engage the Emperor to intercede with Augustus in their behalf, and with so powerful an advocate," added he, smiling, "what can they have to fear!"

"But," returned Phedora, much distressed, "till the hour of their release, what may they not suffer! ah! dearest Baroness, I cannot quit Konigstein whilst they remain here."

"My good Rubenski," replied she, "we cannot leave you here unprotected: I would willingly stay in this place to greet our friends on the first instant of their release; but the governor has likewise intimated, that the Baron must not leave any one of his train to observe the destination of the prisoners, should the King his master order their removal to any other fortress."

"I am not known to belong to the Baron," said Phedora, eagerly: "suffer me then, unnoticed as I shall be, to endeavour sometimes to alleviate what they must feel, by cheering them with the repetition of your friendly efforts to serve them. I shall be able surely,  
if





departure ; and the sight of them quickened the grief of Phedora to agony.

“ What will the Countess—what will my poor Ulmeri think,” exclaimed she, wringing her hands, “ at being thus apparently abandoned, for weeks perhaps, to a state so hopelessly miserable ? Oh they will sink under the sickly despondency of expectation, revived for a moment only to be dashed again into the abyss of despair.”

The Baron could not behold her strong uneasiness without extremely applauding the sentiment from which it sprung ; more especially when he recollected that those very beings for whom it was manifested, were the opposers of that affection, which whilst her heart cherished, her actions were taught to disavow. Madame Hartsen too, compassionated the emotions she witnessed, and even began to be alarmed at their violence, but the plan of Phedora she still thought too rash to be indulged : yet when the travelling carriage

carriage appeared at the door, and her young friend, almost suffocated with sobs, turned her eyes towards the fortress, and refused to enter it, the Baroness very much distressed, after attempting an useless expostulation, consulted a few moments with her husband, and at length told Phedora that they would no longer oppose her resolution.

“ We will trust to your prudence and circumspection, my good girl,” said Madame Hartsen, “ to combat your too active affection for your friends: you have served them essentially by the little plan you so happily executed; but remember their liberation is now our care, and do not hazard any other enterprize merely from the consideration of removing an inquietude which, from our exertions, shall only be a temporary one.”

Phedora was delighted on any terms to remain near the beloved prisoners, and promised, though rather reluctantly, that she would not endeavour to speak to them again,  
if

if she could continue to hear from Stabinsk that they were well, and not very unhappy. The Baroness was not satisfied however, with this conditional agreement, and exacted from her a concession that only the most urgent intelligence from the castle should have the power of drawing her thither.

Nurse was to remain at Konigstein to attend her: the poor creature was not without anxiety at the prospect of being again separated from little Frederick, and it was only the extreme affection she had conceived for Phedora, as the preserver of the child, that could have induced her to consent to it. To soothe her chagrin, the Baroness promised her, that when they met again, she would take her anew into her family, from whence she should never more be removed. This was the highest point of felicity nurse had any idea of arriving at, and it completely reconciled her to the short absence imposed upon her. She was entrusted with money to support herself and Phedora, and enjoined to remove to a small habitation as distant as possible from the one the Baron  
and

and his family had occupied, to prevent a suspicion that she had had any further communication with them, than merely serving as a temporary domestic during their stay at Konigstein.

The Baroness repeated to Phedora, in the presence of nurse, an entreaty not to expose herself to danger, by endeavouring to converse with the prisoners, at least till she had heard the effect of the Baron's intercession in their favour.

“We shall return here, if possible,” added she, “to inform them in person of the pleasing news of their liberation. It may be a fortnight or three weeks before you hear of us again; yet consider, my dear Phedora, that though we shall be many leagues separated from the Rectzizis, we shall be indefatigable in their behalf: and without the most active and persevering efforts, they might not perhaps be suffered to enjoy their freedom for months, or even years. Have  
patience



patience therefore, should we exceed the given time of our return—but if the Baron should not be able to obtain leave for another journey hither, we must be compelled, if he succeeds in his application, to send the pleasing intelligence by another: in that case we must resign you for the present only, to our mutual friends. I will not suppose so afflicting a circumstance as the failure of the Baron's intercessions—it is necessary however, that we extend our cares for you even to the possibility of such an event; and when I consider that all we could do, were we prevented from returning ourselves, would be to send a trusty servant to conduct you to Poland, I feel doubly anxious and alarmed at our separation."

"Ah! dearest Madam, do not torment yourself and me with supposing the worst that can happen," cried Phedora; "I must, I will hope that this dear family, through your mediation, will regain their freedom; for if they are doomed to languish out their

existence in a dreary prison, I shall not care what becomes of the wretched Rubenski."

"Let me still prevail with you to think," resumed Madame Hartsen earnestly, "that it will be better to accompany us to Warsaw."

The Baron joined in the entreaty; but Phedora still clung to the idea of remaining at Konigstein, to soothe the captivity of the benevolent Rectzizis, secretly resolving to make a desperate effort to share their prison, should the interest of the Baron, and the representations of their innocence, be unavailing.

Finding every argument insufficient to induce Phedora to give up her wish, the Baron and his lady embraced and earnestly recommended her to the zealous care of nurse, who was repeatedly cautioned to beware of exposing her lovely charge to observation; and having settled that she should retain her adopted character of niece to Stabinsk, and be said to have been in the service  
of

of a Polish lady, should any one enquire concerning her, they ascended with little Frederick the carriage that waited to convey them to Dresden. The child was infinitely unwilling to part with his first and greatest favourite ; and Phedora, on her side, felt extremely affected at the fond reluctance he exhibited on being taken from her, almost regardless of the caresses of his mother.

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## CHAP. V.

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- “ These are the effects of doating age,  
“ Vain doubts, and idle cares, and over caution ;  
“ The second nonage of a soul more wise,  
“ But now decay’d, and sunk into the socket,  
“ Peeping by fits, and giving feeble light.”

WHEN the travellers were advanced on their road to Pirna, the weeping Rubenski sent after them the most fervent wishes of success to their generous undertaking : she

had almost involuntarily followed the track of the wheels until she had ascended a high hill, which was overlooked however, by the exalted fortress of Konigstein, that appeared from thence totally inaccessible to human footsteps. Phedora now again caught sight of the travellers, and watched the receding wheels till she could no longer discern them : she then turned her eyes towards the castle, whose ramparts seemed to overhang the spot on which she stood.

“ Ah ! good nurse ! ” she suddenly exclaimed to Michael’s wife, who had followed her, “ that I could for one moment be the sovereign of this place, to bid those great walls open and set free the prisoners that sigh within them ! ”

“ Why truly, ” replied nurse, “ I think your great Kings might as well take a fancy now and then to give the poor pent up folks a holiday, and say, “ there, go your ways, and run about again ; ” but Lord, they say that great Kings don’t think harm of cramming the dungeons of such places as these

these as full as they can hold : because I suppose they never put their own grand crowned heads into one, to see what poor damp holes they be."

Phedora, not much attending to this harangue of honest nurse, was now surveying the adjacent country : she observed, on one hand, the castle of Sonnenstein, but without recognizing it to be the same she had seen at Pirna. The scenery, on the other side, attracted a more settled attention : scarcely discernable, but as a cluster of buildings, yet a pleasing object, was the little town of Auffig, situated on the Elbe, and encircled by the mountains of Bohemia. The course of the river was distinguishable for many leagues, intercepted however, here and there by a chain of steepes that rose from its banks, and half hid some of the villages which were scattered at intervals over the vallies.

Phedora, having gazed a few moments round her, turned again with a sigh to Ko-

nigstein.—“ Let us return, nurse,” said she ; “ your husband is by this time relieved, and perhaps he can tell us something of the dear prisoners.”

“ If he can’t do that,” replied she, “ he can help us to find some place fit for you to put your head into ; and yet not such a place as my lady Baroness would live in, you know, for fear folks should think you and she more than mistress and waiting girl.”

“ Hush, hush !” cried Phedora : “ beware, good nurse, of revealing that I am not in reality your niece ; and do not repeat the name of the dear and amiable Baroness.”

“ Never fear me,” returned she, “ my tongue should not harm you for the world, as long as I can remember what you have done for the dear young Baron Frederick—bless his little heart ! I wonder how far they are on their way by this time !”

Phedora could not satisfy the enquiry, but she sincerely joined in praying for the speedy return of her friends.

Within

Within an hundred yards of the foot of Konigstein rock, nurse, without the assistance of her husband, who was not yet off duty, found a little habitation, which both Phedora and herself approved. It was partly occupied by a poor old woman, whose granddaughter had followed a soldier of the fort, when his regiment, which had been recently ordered into Poland, left Konigstein; and the helpless parent, thus shamefully abandoned, was reduced to the most wretched extreme of poverty, broken hearted, and sinking to the grave by the force of reflections, that "bite" indeed "sharper than a serpent's tooth," picturing for ever to her mind her thankless ungrateful child. She was an object to which the gentle bosom of Phedora turned with compassion and kindness: for it was not long before the poor old creature poured out her full heart to her, and considering her in the humble character of Michael's niece, cautioned her to guard against the lures of seduction, and avoid the dissolute conversation of soldiers, who



herded with great folks, she said, and killed and maimed till they thought nothing of betraying and deceiving a silly girl, till she too, liked to herd, with them, and then she got hard-hearted, and left her kin and her parents to cry and bemoan themselves, and starve and die.

Nurse, whose nature was far from being flinty, exclaimed vehemently against the villainy of man, and declared, that even Stabinsk, now he was a soldier, was not so kind-fouled as when he was a countryman.

“For do you see,” continued she, “instead of helping to make the pot boil when we could get any thing to put in it, God help us! there he’ll stand you by the hour, scouring his musquet and bayonet: and when I was breaking my heart to think of the days that are gone by us, which we shall never see again; there, instead of crying too, and saying as he used, “cheer up, things will mend,” he hardly hears me for bustling to  
get

get his finery cleaned ; and all for what I warrant ? why just to stand in the rain oftentimes, and get it dirtied again directly."

The old woman shook her head, and assented to the result of nurse's proposition, whilst Phedora reflected upon the sentiments they had both betrayed, with unusual earnestness. : the Baron however, had said that soldiers were necessary in every state, and strict discipline necessary for every soldier ; so she concluded her mental arguments, by combating her own ideas with a supposition that he must be right. But so deep had been the reverie into which she was plunged, that nurse twice told her she was going to inform Michael of their new residence, and Phedora, when she discovered her departure, was ignorant of the occasion of it.

" Lack-a-day !" said the old woman aloud, " now what can that young soul be thinking of ? Ah, me ! my poor child used to sit just so, looking and looking as if gold

was hid in the chinks of the floor ; St. Nicholas help us ; what a thing it is to be in love !”

“ Who is in love ?” said Phedora starting : and regarding her aged companion with a full conviction that it could not be her, she naturally concluded the apostrophe was aimed at herself.

“ Ah ! good mother,” resumed she, “ I was not thinking of love just now—I was thinking of war ; but what can I do to help you ?”

“ If I could get to the door,” replied the poor creature, “ I think the air would do me good : Mathé used to get me to the door, but since she has been away, nobody cares for me, and here I sit pining to myself for that ungrateful girl, that I brought up so kindly, and she does not once think of such a helpless old wretch as me.”

“ Let me serve you,” exclaimed Phedora tenderly, “ as Mathé did : I will help you to the door, and you shall again feel how sweet the summer breeze is. I will smooth your  
bed

bed too, and help you into it, and give you your morning's meal, and sing and chat to you, as I did to my own grandmother."

"You did not surely leave her after all?" said the old woman, with tears in her eyes.

"No," replied Phedora, with the same token of sorrow, "she died, and left me:—but I do not grieve at it—now, because she was taken from misfortunes that would have killed her more cruelly."

Her ancient companion sighed, and Phedora immediately changed the subject of conversation; but was not so much occupied by it, as to forget to look out every two minutes for nurse and Michael: at length she saw them coming down the winding path that led from the fortress, and run to meet them.

"Tell me, good Stabinsk," cried she, "did you speak to the dear prisoners after I left you?"

Michael, looking cautiously round, said  
“ Yes ; but I can't tell you here.”

“ Hasten then,” exclaimed she ; and perceiving that he was laden with his knapsack, besides some kitchen utensils, and his musket, she snatched part of his burthen from him, and disregarding the steepness of the path, flew towards her new residence.

Stabinsk soon followed, and nurse, who was charged with the rest of her household furniture, without being much oppressed under the weight of it, brought up the rear. She entered into chat with their old hostess, whilst Phedora drew Michael into another division of the cottage, and eagerly enquired what conversation he had had with the Count's family.

“ Not much,” replied he ; “ for though I heard them speak loud, more than once, as if to somebody in the passage, I could not put my head to the door to listen, till all was safe, and then it was almost time to relieve  
4 guard.

guard. So I called out to them that nobody was near but a friend ; and they asked who spoke to them some minutes before, and I said one that came to Konigstein with Baron Hartfen, and told them your name, and I heard them say to each other, she is then alive !”

“ Well,” cried Phedora impatiently, “ what more ?”

“ The one with the softest voice,” continued he, “ asked when you would come again, and I said I could not tell : and then I was obliged to bid them keep silence, for I heard the officer relieving guard at the end of the corridor. When he came up to me, I found that it was Lieutenant Langhartz, the governor’s nephew, who spoke to me with great favour, and ordered me to attend him at his apartment : so I went, little thinking what was to come ; and he gave me some Potzkal’sky wine, and told me he had spoke to my wife, who was a very good sort of woman ; but now came out the virtue of the jest—he said he had seen my pretty niece too, and it was pity she was going  
away

away from Konigstein so soon, for if she staid, she might see her uncle made a serjeant."

"You must persuade her to stay," says he, "and you shall see what will follow."

"Well, dear Michael," said Phedora, "do not tell me any thing more of that silly man: did you not converse further then with my beloved friends?"

"If it had not been for the Lieutenant I could not," replied Stabinsk: "but he kept me so long, that one of our serjeants came to ask him if he was at leisure to see dinner carried to the prisoners."

"Let it wait," says he; "so I told him as I had now no other duty than to wait upon his commands, if he chose I could help to carry the dinner, and attend him afterwards. He agreed; for he said he had much to speak to me about: so the dinner was brought, and away we marched."

"Does he always accompany it?" asked Phedora.

"Yes," returned Stabinsk, "he stands at the door with his sword drawn, and the centinel



centinel with his bayonet fixed and musquet pointed : why all this is I can't say ; for I am sure the ladies, poor souls ! don't think of making their escape."

"Go on," said Phedora eagerly.

"Well," continued Michael, "he unbarred the door, and unlocked it, for he had been, as usual, to ask the keys of the governor, and in I went to the ladies, with their dinner. I thought they seemed to want me to speak to them ; but I did not dare to make known that I was their friend, only by looking at the door, and then at them ; and the young lady whispered something to her mother, but she frowned at her, and still they said nothing ; when all of a sudden the Lieutenant saw something he did not like about the centinel's musket that stood beside him, and as he is deadly passionate, he gave the fellow a severe reprimand, and two or three blows upon the instant : whilst I, hearing the noise he kept up, told the Countess softly that I was the centinel she had spoke to, and the Baron,  
my

my good master, would get her and the Count and their daughter released, for he knew of their misfortune.

‘ When will our dear Rubenski come to us again,’ said the young lady, before her mother could speak ; “ tell her good generous soldier, that the sound of her voice has given me new life, and I am all impatience to hear it again, that I may be assured she is really alive.’

“ I was afraid,” continued Stabinsk, “ to say or hear any more, so I told them aloud to hasten, and our officer repeated the command, and they swallowed a small portion of their meal, and sent the rest away.” Phedora sighed.—“ When we went to the Count’s cell, he was walking to and fro ; and when I entered, and set down the victuals, I found that I was seen from the door way, for it was quite open, so I could not speak to him.

‘ How did he look ?’ asked Phedora.

“ I think,” said Michael, “ he seemed grieved and angry ; and he did not eat much neither, so my task was soon over :—

and

and then Lieutenant Langhartz took me again to his apartments, and began to talk of my niece, and bid me keep her at Konigstein to be company to my wife ; and asked me too where we lived ; and when I told him, ‘ Oh but,’ says he, ‘ you can’t live all three in that hole : you must get some pretty cottage hereabouts, and I will send your wife some Potzkalsky, and go and drink a glass with her now and then to cheer up her spirits, because winter is coming on you know.

‘ Do not speak any more of this Langhartz,’ said Phedora peevishly.

“ I would willingly hold my tongue about him,” replied Stabinsk, “ but I am afraid we shall have him here before we know where we are, and I thought to prepare you for his coming.

‘ I hope you are mistaken,’ cried she.

“ I am sure he has no good in his head,” resumed Michael ; “ however, the Baron and our good lady will soon be back to take care of you, and here’s my wife and I will die before

before they shall have it to say that she betrayed her trust a second time.

‘Thank you, good Stabinsk,’ said Phedora—“what did you tell me the young Countess Ulmeri said to you?”

“She wished to hear your voice again,” replied he, “to be certain that you are alive.”

Michael then withdrew; and Phedora began to place the request of Ulmeri in a balance against her promise to the Baroness, and was obliged to confess that the promise ought to outweigh the inclination of her young friend and her own added to it: yet she grieved to disappoint her hopes, more especially, as it was not probable Michael would soon again mount guard in that particular spot, which could alone enable him to communicate to the Countess and her daughter why she was withheld from once more attempting to speak to them.

Her

Her anxious reflections upon this subject could not however, make her forget her offered kindness to her venerable hostess, and she much exceeded the little catalogue of attentions she had professed herself so ready to pay. Mathé's grandmother wept with gratitude, and called down blessings upon her sweet pretty head, when the next morning she again assisted her to the cottage door, to draw in the freshness of the early breeze.

Michael had slept at the fort ; not only because their little habitation was not sufficiently spacious to accommodate him, but equally because he dared not be absent from the castle all night.

Nurse was busy arranging every thing as well as she was able, for the benefit of Phedora, who was endeavouring to rally her own spirits, that she might chase the gloom from the countenance and heart of her aged companion, where Stabinsk returned to them : he set down some flasks of Bohemian wine,  
with

with an observation that they would prove the fore-runners of a visitor nobody wanted to see.

“Who is that Mi—— good uncle?” said Phedora.

“Lieutenant Langhorts,” returned he.

“I pray thee now,” cried the old woman, eagerly looking at her lovely attendant, “do not let this man delude thee! What should he come here for but to see your niece,” added she to nurse in an angry tone: “and if you love her, don’t let him bewitch her heart away as my poor Mathé’s was.”

“Never fear,” said nurse sagaciously;—  
“you don’t know what we know.”

“I know,” returned the poor creature, in great agitation, “that if you don’t take care, you will lose your niece. Ah me, that folks will not take warning!”

“Indeed, dear mother,” said Phedora smiling, “this Langhorts shall never have influence enough to take me from you.”

“Ah!

“ Ah ! sweet girl,” exclaimed Mathé’s grand mother ; “ but we can’t tell what may happen !”

“ No harm, I hope,” cried Phedora with a cheerful air.

“ God forbid !” ejaculated Stabinsk, and nurse echoed the sentence with great fervor.

The cause of this alarm, Lieutenant Langhertz, now appeared hastening down the path from the fort, with a mien of such exultation, that the terrors of the poor old woman redoubled.

“ Ah me,” repeated she, “ that folks will not take warning ! Now if this dear child was mine, I would shut the door against him, and keep her safe from his wiles.”

“ Would you ?” cried Phedora : “ why then, good mother, I will go in, and shut the door myself.”

Her venerable friend was delighted with her prudence, nor was nurse displeased at it when



when she recollected the parting injunctions of the Baroness: though at the same time she feared her husband would not fare the better for the discretion of his supposed niece.

“Stabinsk,” cried the officer, as he reached the groupe, “why does that pretty little creature run away? then turning to nurse with an air of affability, he asked if she were recovered from the fright of the preceding day. She courtesied with great respect, and replied in the affirmative.

“That is well,” cried the Lieutenant; “then fetch your little niece, that I may make the same enquiry of her.”

“Please you,” said nurse, again curtsying, “she is bashful, and I shall not be able to make her show her face.”

“No!” exclaimed he, with strong surprise, “has she not yet learnt to value that lovely face, that she condemns it to retire behind the veil timidity would drop before it!”

The

The old woman shrugged her shoulders at this rhapsody, which she could not comprehend, and muttered a sort of spell unpropitious to the evident intentions of Phedora's admirer: he took no notice however, of her sulky demeanor, but again requested nurse to produce the runaway; enforcing the demand with an attempt to open a door leading to the little cabin where she had hidden herself: but Phedora opposed all her strength to the effort, and as he concluded it was fastened within, he gave up the contest.

"Is there no other way into that room, Stabinsk?" asked he.

Michael could not inform him; but the old woman told him with great glee, that the cottage had the rock itself for a lean to on that side, so there was no other entrance for certain.

"Now I think of the circumstance," said the officer suddenly, turning to nurse, "let me

me enquire why you neglected to call at my apartment, as I desired you yesterday?"

She immediately related what had happened, but Langhartz, being out of temper with his present disappointment, would not accept the excuse, and told her she ought to have waited his return. Phedora, hearing him speak in a loud and angry tone, feared his displeasure would fall heavy upon poor Stabinsk, and was besides unwilling to irritate him too seriously, lest, on having occasion to employ his influence and connivance in conversing with the Countess Rectzizi, he should deny it to her intercession. Unwillingly then she opened the door, and to the great mortification of her old hostess, appeared to the impatient Langhartz, blushing indeed, but without any of those signs of rusticity he expected to behold. He forgot his anger in the contemplation of a figure from which Raphael might have formed his graceful contour, and Peters have stolen his delicate yet glowing tints. On the preceding

ding day, the cheeks of Phedora were pallid with terror and pain, and every feature charged with anxiety, doubt, and inquietude: the native expression of her countenance was almost effaced by her emotions, yet enough of it remained to catch the eye, and interest the heart. But now that hope re-animated the beamy lustre of her eye, and lurked in the smile that trembled round her lips, as if uncertain whether to abide there or retire at the call of timidity, the Lieutenant gazed at her with admiration and intuitive respect, and felt at a loss to account for the rude urgency with which he had demanded her.—To the niece of Stabinsk he had imagined no excuse would be necessary; but then she must have been exactly what he had supposed her, very pretty indeed, but without those unwished-for graces of deportment and mind Phedora too plainly possessed.

After some hesitation, he enquired if she still felt inconvenience from her fall. She thanked him in accents rather unsuited to

the garb she wore, and said she had quite forgotten the accident.

“ May I ask,” returned he, “ who brought you to Konigstein ?”

“ A lady,” replied Phedora, rather confused, “ whom I serve.”

The avowed humility of her situation restored the vivacity and courage of her interrogator.

“ I am delighted,” replied he, “ that she left you here ; “ and I hope Stabinsk will prevail with you to remain with his wife, who must want a companion whilst he is necessarily absent.—What is the name of this lady ?”

“ Baroness Hartfen,” said Phedora, endeavouring in vain to recollect some other name to make use of.

“ How long,” asked he, “ were you in her service ?”

“ Only

"Only a short time; I was first in the family of a friend of the Baroness."

"On what occasion," continued he with encreasing curiosity, "did this lady come to Konigstein?"

Phedora, much alarmed at this string of questions, imagined the safest and most simple motive she could assign for the journey would be the true one.

"My aunt Stabinsk," returned she, "was nurse to the young Baron, and in his infancy unhappily lost him."

"God forgive me, careless wretch that I was!" ejaculated nurse.

"The child was found again, and the Baroness wished to hear the particulars of the circumstance from my aunt herself, to corroborate the discovery she had made. Nurse's husband—my uncle, was here with her: the good Baroness travelled from Warsaw hither, and I attended her: she is going further on—to Prague, I be-

lieve—and when she returns, she will take me again with her.”

“ No, I hope not,” exclaimed Langhertz warmly ; “ I must employ all my influence with Stabinsk to make him with-hold his consent to that.”

The castle clock now reminded him that he must immediately return thither, and to the infinite relief of Phedora and the whole party, he was compelled to a cessation of enquiry, having only time to bid them adieu, and kiss the hand of Madame Hartfen’s lovely attendant, a condescension she would willingly have avoided. Michael followed, or rather accompanied him back, for the Lieutenant the whole way to the fort, though his haste and the ascending motion made him labour for breath, ceased not a most voluble and animated panegyric of the charming Phedora Stabinsk, except indeed when Michael found an opportunity of answering a few of the questions he rained upon him at the close of every eulogium.

“ Now



“ Now good mother,” cried Phedora to her hostess, who sat shaking her head, and muttering that people would not take warning ; “ now good mother ; be satisfied, for I declare to you, I do not think this man at all dangerous : he shall not bewitch away my heart, depend upon it.”

“ Ay, ay,” said the old woman, “ so you say just now—will you say so by and by ?”

“ I shall not have occasion to say it some time hence,” replied Phedora, “ it will be quite certain even to you.”

Mathé's grandmother was however, incredulous, and fretted and muttered till Phedora began to be vexed at her obstinacy of opinion ; and insensibly relaxing in her efforts to convince her, suffered her mind to dwell upon an image which always raised a warfare in her bosom, far more dangerous to its peace than the pursuit of this Langhartz, whom her ancient friend so much dreaded. She then became pensive, the good hostess continued her half pronounced lamentations,

and nurse retired to another division of the cottage to dress the dinner. Phedora, unmindful of the moments as they flew, sat on a little hillock before the door, absorbed in thoughtfulness, till the ideas that crowded upon her, led her eyes from the earth on which they had been fixed, up to the castle that contained the father, the mother, and sister of Rectzizi. She sighed deeply—an answering sigh, yet more tremulous than her own, made her look round: it was Mathé's grandmother who uttered it, with her dim eyes fixed on Phedora, and the tears trickling down the furrows of her cheeks.

“ Ah, why is this distress, dear mother,” exclaimed Phedora, “ why do you weep ?”

“ Partly for you,” replied the old woman, “ and partly for my ungrateful child, who used to sit just there, and look up to the castle just so, when I would not suffer that villain of a soldier to come any more to our cottage.”

“ Mathé

“Mathé will perhaps return,” said Phedora; “and as for me, why will you fear an evil that will never happen. However, as this Langhorts has been the cause of such uneasiness to you, I am determined, good mother, that his wine shall bring back some of your scattered spirits. I know,” added she, in a gayer tone, “that I shall have my uncle’s permission to open one of the flasks.”

The old woman resisted the proposal for some time; but the importunity of Phedora prevailed, and after a glass of Potzkalisky, she forgot, for the present, all her distress.

Michael did not return to his dinner, which his wife, as usual, was obliged to carry to him: as she walked down the path, and approached the cottage, after having performed this task, Phedora instantly perceived in her countenance an anxiety that alarmed her: a thousand wild conjectures rose to her imagination, picturing the most horrible catastrophe as having happened to the beloved prisoners.

L 4

“Ah,

“ Ah, nurse,” exclaimed she, “ tell me all—I will know the worst, and I will die with them !”

“ I hope not,” cried nurse all aghast ;—  
“ for what good will that do ? and what would my lady Baroness say to me ?”

“ They are killed then,” said Phedora, hardly able to articulate : “ perhaps it was my imprudence that occasioned it—I should not have ventured to the castle !”

“ Bless us, nobody is dead,” replied nurse ; “ only one of the ladies,” continued she, whispering, “ is ill : I believe it is the young one.”

“ And no one to attend her !” exclaimed Phedora, “ no one to nurse the dear Ulmeri, and soothe the distraction of her anxious mother.”

Then entirely disregarding the presence of the old woman, who knew not what to think of her inmates, she added, “ Nurse, I must try to gain admittance to them. I will kneel and beg——”

“ But

“ But my husband,” interrupted she, still in a whisper, “ is now centinel on one of the ramparts—he can do nothing.”

“ I must try this Langhartz,” said Phedora eagerly ; “ I will fall at his feet, and implore his compassion !”

“ What will the Baronefs say ?” cried nurse, half terrified at her urgency.

“ Will not my poor Ulmeri die without assistance,” said Phedora, with a degree of anger, “ and will not this warrant my sollicitude—shall I think of myself at such a moment ? Why do I even stay an instant from them ?”

She then flew up the path, deaf to the cries and entreaties of her poor hostess, who now believed her destruction inevitable ; and nurse, still more alarmed, followed her, to afford what little help and protection her presence would ensure. Phedora would not have waited for her, but that she remembered not the way she had traced only once, when

she was as now, in a state of mind that unfitted her for observation.

“ Dear heart,” cried her panting attendant, “ don’t run so fast, “ but tell me a bit what we shall say to the Lieutenant.”

“ I will tell him,” returned Phedora, “ that the Countess was the lady I served, before I was known to Madame Hartfen.”

“ I am afraid,” resumed nurse, “ he will not let you see the ladies.”

“ Oh yes, yes ! if he has any compassion in his nature, he must let me see them and attend them, and endeavour to soften their misfortunes !”

“ As to compassion”—returned Michael’s wife, looking extremely sagacious, “ but I am sure he has a liking for you, and then you know he will like to oblige you.”

“ No, no,” exclaimed Phedora impatiently, “ if he grants my petition, it will be from pity ; for surely there is enough to compassionate in the fate of these dear Rectizis”

“ Ay !”

"Aye!" cried nurse, looking at her with curiosity.

"You cannot imagine," continued Phedora, "how prosperous their fortunes were, before this stroke—which they have not deserved. And their hearts so generous, so beneficent to the unfortunate! Ah! nurse, they succoured me in my childhood."

"Why then," interrupted she, "you do right to go through fire and water as it were, to serve them: and I am sure that sweet cherub, young Baron Frederick, would do the same for you when he grows up and hears you are in trouble—and I will do the like, as I ought in thankfulness—and I will follow you into a dungeon, or all the dungeons of the castle to help you."

Nurse then quickened her pace to keep up with that of Phedora, and they entered the large court of the castle together. It happened that the soldiers were then mustered; but the figure of Michael's wife, much less attractive than that of her companion, nearly

L 6      overshadowed



overshadowed her, and they glided behind the ranks without observation. Phedora felt more assured when she found herself sheltered by the dark archways through which they had to pass, but a recollection of the little disaster that first introduced her to the knowledge of Langhartz, checked the speed her heart prompted her to use.

At length she reached in safety the door of his apartment ; yet a strong sense of impropriety, in spite of her eager wishes to obtain sight of the suffering Ulmeri, arrested her hand when she had raised it to tap for admittance, and she drew back whilst she desired nurse to advance, and give the signal : no one answered, and it was repeated with as little effect. Phedora became extremely anxious at the silence that prevailed within : she supposed it was very probable the Lieutenant might be spending the day with his brother officers—he might not return till the evening—he might return too, in a situation unfit and dangerous for her to meet him in.

The

The poor Countess meantime, and Ulmeri, might endure the utmost distress, the one from sickness unalleviated by the necessary aid, the other from the anguish of beholding her child languishing, without having the power of relieving her. Her scruples vanished at these reflections, and she herself repeatedly rapped at the door ere she would leave it: a step sounded up the passage at the moment Phedora begun wholly to despair: the person stopped at the apartment of the Lieutenant, and entered it—it was himself, and the exclamation of nurse discovered her to him.

“Ha! are you there,” cried he, “and my little Stabinsk too? Come in and tell me what brings you so luckily? What is this lovely creature’s name?” added he, turning to nurse.

This man can never speak, thought the good woman, but out comes a dozen questions.

She

She satisfied his last enquiry however, and Phedora hastened to reply to the first : but dreading lest he should refuse her prayer to be admitted to the cell of the Countess, dreading lest her request might involve her benefactors in further ills—dreading a thousand evils, yet hoping Langhertz would not spurn her intercession, she dropt into an attitude of humble entreaty, and conjured him to take her to the Rectzizi family. He started.

“ My poor—young Countess is ill,” added Phedora ; “ oh let me nurse her, let me attend her, and your name shall never pass my lips without a blessing.”

“ What do you ask ?” exclaimed he, confounded at what he had heard : “ who informed you that the young lady is ill, and—how does it happen that you give this family the name you have just pronounced ?”

“ Does it not appertain to them ?” cried she, rather staggered : then again feeling well assured that the voices she had heard

were those of the Countess and Ulmeri, she added, "Ask me not now, but generously grant my request, and the reward of Heaven will follow your compassion."

"You are not what you have represented yourself to me," said he gravely, yet raising her from the ground: "why have you deceived me—for what purpose?"

"I am the daughter of a peasant," replied Phedora with firmness, "and the bounty of Count Rectzizi preserved my existence:—from his family I passed into that of the Baroness Hartfen, as I mentioned to you: I fervently love my first benefactors, and I implore you to permit my attendance upon the young Countess and her mother."

"I have not the power," returned he, "of granting your petition: you must give it up. You are mistaken too; these walls do not, most probably, contain your friends."

"Oh yes, yes," cried Phedora; then checking herself, "give me but a glimpse of them," she added, "and my heart will instantly

stantly recognize those dear and well remembered——”

“ You are deceived,” interrupted he ;—  
“ yet I adore this grateful warmth, and would willingly be the happy object of an attachment as lively.”

“ If you assent to my entreaty,” replied she, “ could I ever forget a benefit I sue for with such earnestness ?”

“ Do you know,” said the Lieutenant, taking her hand, “ what I should hazard, even to convince you that the ladies you have, I suppose, heard of, are not of the name you have mentioned—I mean by allowing you to see them for a moment ?”

“ Not much, I hope,” cried Phedora, trembling, “ for my heart will break if you reject my prayers.”

“ I should incur, were I detected, the disgrace of being degraded, broke, and all the horrors of eternal imprisonment.”

“ Then I cannot press my request any further,” replied she, bursting into tears.

Nurse

Nurse, affected by her distress, wept too.

“ Alas ! my poor Ulmeri ! ” exclaimed Phedora, “ I must not then attend your sick bed, nor endeavour to soothe the distraction of the Countess ! ”

Langhorts was plunged into a deep reverie ; and having lost all hope, she would have withdrawn, but he detained her.

“ I wish to warn you, beautiful Phedora,” said he, “ that it would be dangerous to evince any knowledge—that is, to appear interested for these prisoners, whoever they may be.”

“ Could I procure them one indulgence,” replied she with enthusiasm, “ even the smallest mitigation of evil, I would in return give up my life with pleasure.”

“ Do not adventure, my lovely Phedora,” cried the Lieutenant, “ a less shocking catastrophe, by any indiscretion : have patience, and I will consider if it will be possible

fible to indulge you : but how would you reward me for the danger I should incur ?”

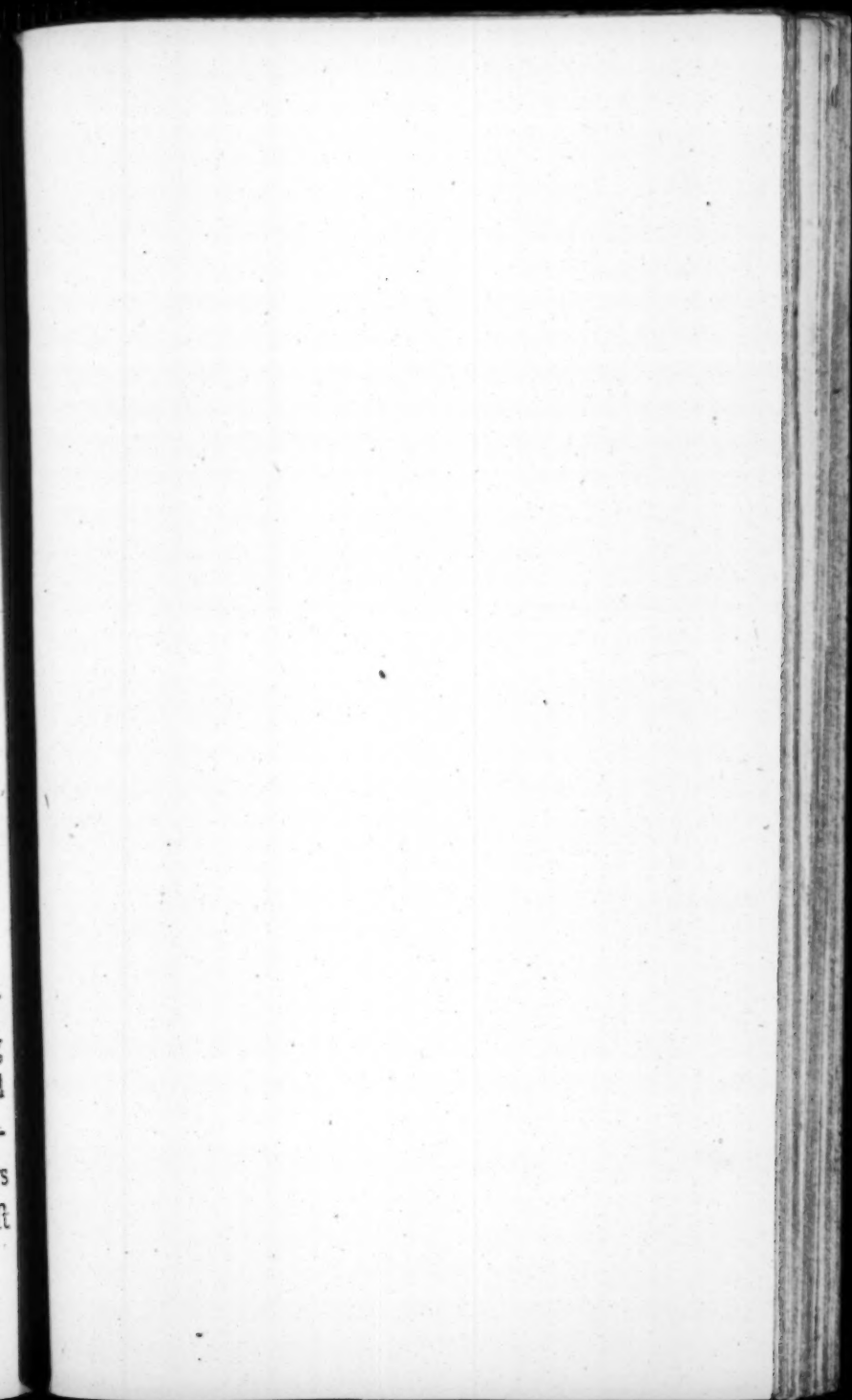
“ By a never ceasing gratitude,” replied she earnestly. Langhertz asked her how she would prove her gratitude.

“ I know not,” said Phedora, rather disconcerted, “ if it would be in my power to prove it ; yet surely the self-approbation that follows an action of superior generosity, goodness, and compassion, is a considerable recompence for the exertion it calls forth !”

“ I think so too,” returned the Lieutenant : “ but there is still another recompence which I shall demand, if I succeed in bringing you to-morrow unnoticed into the presence of the prisoners you have taken so uncommon a delight in naming after your friends.”

The mind of Phedora now lost all other comprehension, but that, on the following day, she should behold the Countess and Ulmeri : she clasped her hands in great emotion ; then recollecting that many hours  
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at the conference : Michael was startled at the inuendos she threw out, and at length ventured to advise Phedora not to return to the fort.

“ What can I do ? ” said she, much distressed ; “ if I irritate this man, he will perhaps revenge himself upon my friends, over whom his situation gives him some power. I ardently long too, to see them—I may be of some service—besides, if he permits me to visit them, he will be too much afraid of what I could disclose, to treat me with persevering insult. Do not dissuade me from going, good Stabinisk,” added she, “ my heart is set upon seeing the beloved Rect-zizis.”

Michael looked uneasy, and charged his wife, when she attended Phedora to the castle, not to quit her a moment, an injunction nurse readily promised to follow. They had stood at some little distance from the cottage door, to elude the curiosity of the old

old woman, which though it was mixed with good-will for Phedora, was extremely excited by the emotions her inmates had discovered, and the words they had dropt.

Michael then took his way to the fort, and nurse retreated into the cottage to settle her little domestic arrangements. Phedora's eyes followed St. oinsk for some time, as he ascended the path, and she then sat herself down, covering her face with her hands, and buried in meditation.

"Does this way lead to the castle?" said a voice that awakened her to recollection: she started up with precipitation at sounds so little expected, and beheld in the enquirer Cassimir Rectzizi.

"Is this possible!" exclaimed he: "do I see Phedora in this garb? you know then who are confined in this fortress?"

"Too, too well!" replied she: "I have spoken to them—be not however, unhappy;  
Baron

Baron Hartfen is now employed in procuring their liberty."

She then told him by what accident the imprisonment of his family had transpired, and to account for her own situation, mentioned that her unwillingness to quit the vicinity of the place which contained three beings she so much loved, had induced her friends to leave her there.

"Dearest, best of creatures!" said Casimir, kissing her hands; "how little did I expect such a consolation as this, and how sweet is it in such a moment, when my mind was almost overwhelmed with despair, to be soothed with the certainty that my charming Phedora takes so generous an interest in the misfortunes of my family! Were I enclosed in the most loathsome dungeon of that building, and suffering all the rigours the art of man could inflict, and could I obtain from you a commiseration so tender, I would welcome them all."

"Hush!"

“Hush!” cried she; “do not talk in this strain: consider, that at this moment perhaps—do you know that our dear Ulmeri is indisposed?”

“Not much, I hope,” returned Cassimir; “you have spoken to her, you say—have you seen her too, my lovely Phedora? Have you seen my mother, my father?”

“Alas! no: I spoke to the Countess and Ulmeri through the door of their cell.”

“My father—have you not conversed with him?”

“I had not time or opportunity: to-morrow however, I am to be admitted to the presence of your dear mother and sister: I have received a promise to that effect.”

Reetzizi required her to explain by what means; and though, in relating her encounter with Langhartz, she wholly omitted the offensive part of his conduct, he extremely disapproved of the hazard she must run, and earnestly conjured her to give up the design, as neither the Countess nor Ulmeri could be disappointed at her failure because

because they would not be acquainted with her intention. Phedora repeated what she had said to Michael, that her heart was set upon this plan, nor could she be at all easy until she became assured that her young friend was not dangerously ill. Cassimir was far from being satisfied with this mode of reasoning.

“How can you be certain,” said he, “that this person, who has so readily offered to serve you, will not betray the confidence you place in him, at the moment when unable to retreat, you are wholly in his power? The intercession of the good Baron, which you cheer my heart by informing me of, I have much reliance upon; and until I learn that it fails, I will myself forbear any rash attempt, which in the interval may do irreparable mischief.”

Phedora, grieved at his determined opposition, dropt the subject, and enquired in

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what



what manner he had discovered the situation of his family.

“ From a Polish officer, one of their escort,” returned he, “ who fortunately chanced to be acquainted both with my brother and myself, I heard the afflicting news. I have been, my Phedora to Warsaw, and thrown myself at the feet of Augustus, who instead of attending to my petition, enquired, with some marks of surprise, wherefore I should imagine that my family were detained at Konigstein ; and finding that I evaded the question, haughtily told me that the circumstance of being in the service of the Czar, his brother and ally, alone screened me from the effects of his indignation, for so rashly accusing him of secreting my family. I began to suspect,” continued Cassimir, “ that I had been misinformed ; and as I walked back to the place where I had taken up my abode, I met my friend the Polish officer, and observed that he avoided me. In the first moment of my disappointment, I was

unjust enough to imagine that he had purposely deceived me, though for what cause or motive I could not divine, and I hastily followed him, but he luckily succeeded in escaping a meeting. I then flew to the house our good Lumerski had occupied; he no longer dwelt at it, and I was told he had left Warsaw. I wandered next to the habitation of the Baron, in the dear hope of receiving consolation from the sympathy of my gentle Rubenski—there too I was disappointed. Ah! dear Phedora, I tore myself from you to obtain the approbation of the Count and my mother to our union: they had just quitted Lublin as I arrived at it, and from a friend I learnt, that business of importance called them into Luthuania, but that they assuredly meant first to visit Warsaw. I traced them some part of the way on their road thither, but at length could hear no further intelligence of them, and I concluded they had altered their route, and were journeying to Luthuania, where the same business demanded my presence: to Luthuania

then I flew with impatience, and too late found my mistake: on my way back to Warsaw, I heard of their disgrace, and hastened forward with still greater impetuosity.

[“On the evening after my unsuccessful application to liberate these dear parents, the Polish officer came to me muffled in his cloak, and apologised for his conduct a few hours before, which had been prompted, he said, by self preservation: for he had seen me petitioning Augustus, and guessed the subject of it. He again positively assured me that my family were at Konigstein castle, and told me further that their imprisonment was meant to be so well preserved from the knowledge of their friends, that to be heard enquiring into their name and quality subjected their guards to punishment: and that he had himself delivered orders to the governor to arrest all those who presumed to attempt either to see or converse with them. I asked him if he knew the reason of such strict severity; but of that he could not inform me.

I procured, on my way hither, an order from Dresden to view the fort, for which purpose I borrowed the name of Lumeriski : but I will be cautious of detection, because I have a lively hope in the effect of those friendly efforts the Baron is making. Let me persuade you, my lovely Phedora, to await it, and forbear to expose yourself too generously to the danger of being detained at the castle as a prisoner. I should, I am certain, commit some imprudence if this were to be the case, and injure the cause of my family, whom we both so earnestly wish to liberate.

‘ Nothing of this will happen, I am convinced,’ said she with an obstinacy of opinion unusual to her ; ‘ I shall return in safety, with the satisfaction perhaps, of having administered some little consolation to my benefactors : and if you knew how cruelly I should be tormented with the idea of the suffering Ulmeri, sick, unhappy, and without succour or attendants, you would cease even to wish to restrain me from going to her.”

“ I know the tender goodness of that gentle heart,” resumed he ; “ yet surely you will be satisfied to be convinced through me, of the actual situation of my sister : the officer, whose compassion has been so much excited, will not surely object to substitute me to-morrow in the place of my Phedora, and I will then bring you a very faithful account of poor Ulmeri.”

She felt extremely discomposed at this unexpected proposition ; for the comments of nurse, the credit Michael attached to them, and the perpetual cautions and reproaches of the old woman, joined to what she had herself remarked in the conduct of Langhartz, had given her suspicions she earnestly wished to preserve from the knowledge of Cassimir.

“ I am considered here,” said she, hesitating, “ as the niece of Stabinsk the soldier, and in this habit I can go to the castle, and even to the door of the cell that contains the Countess, without suspicion ; but you  
will

will be observed and subjected to interrogations and surmises that would never be excited by me. The Lieutenant may intend to take me to your sister, as a temporary attendant, and if this is not his plan, I mean to suggest it to him : suffer me then to go to-morrow alone, at least with only my usual companion, the wife of Stabinsk."

"Where is she?" asked Rectzizi;—"where do you reside?"

"At this cottage: but our hostess is a very inquisitive old woman, though a very good one, and would not rest till she had discovered who you are. Do not show yourself," added Phedora earnestly, "until my return from the castle."

This request, which originated from her dread, lest Mathé's grandmother should infuse her own suspicions into the mind of Cassimir, and render him more averse from her projected expedition, he readily complied with.

“ But may I not see the woman you call nurse ?” enquired he.

“ I will run and bring her to you,” returned Phedora.

She then flew to the cottage, and having informed Michael’s wife of the name of the stranger, and his relation to the prisoners, she cautioned her not to suffer a word to escape her respecting Langhorts, that might prevent her intended visit.

Nurse promised fair, and delighted to think her old hostess was not to be entrusted with the secret, which would only, she said, make her grumble and scold the more ; because the gentleman was a Captain, she followed Phedora with great glee, and making her courtesy to Cassimir, soon gave him a very ample account of herself, of the generous forgiveness of the Baroness, and the obligations they all owed to Phedora : a narrative that displayed the simple goodness of her own heart, and the warm attachment she  
had



had conceived for her lovely young charge. Cassimir was much pleased to observe it.

“ You will go then to the castle to-morrow ?” said he, with——”

“ To be sure I shall, interrupted nurse ; “ my husband would not but have me to take care that she comes to no harm for all the world : for says he——”

“ The good Baroness,” cried Phedora, eager to check her dangerous volubility, “ charged these worthy people to be careful of me, and you find her injunctions are well attended to. But nurse,” added she, “ I fear Captain Rectzizi has not dined ; can we give him any refreshment ?”

The good woman, on receiving this hint, hastened to bring out her provisions, for he confessed that the supposition of Phedora was just, and soon returned with every dainty the cottage contained, consisting of cheese made of goat’s milk, bread of a second quality, and the remnant of a fowl, from which

Phedora and Mathé's grandmother had already dined : but a flask of the Potzalsky wine qualified the whole, and Cassimir, seated under a projection of the rock, with Phedora for his cup-bearer, made a meal more delicious than he had ever partaken of in the palace of his grandfather, whose representative he was now become.

The fortress of Königstein was entirely visible from this little retreat, and as his eyes, following those of his beautiful companion, turned upon its almost inaccessible ramparts, he reproached himself for the sensation of happiness that had pervaded his heart, whilst his family were still fighting for the first of blessings, liberty.

Nurse gathered up the fragments of the feast, and was charged by Phedora to make their old hostess drink some of the Lieutenant's wine. She then strolled with Rectzizi into the Pirna road, and told him she

was

was now repeating the walk she had taken on the preceding day.

“ I knew,” continued she, “ that it was impossible the travellers should even have reached Dresden on their way back ; but I came to amuse my fancy with the sweet hope of catching a sight of them, two or three weeks hence perhaps, returning over the road that winds into the wood from under the craggy rock ; for it was there I lost the last glimpse of them as they left Konigstein. I intended to come here again to-day, but I thought of coming alone, for I could not foresee that I should have a companion in my rambles equally interested in the return of the Baron and Madame Hartfen, and who could gaze upon those enclosing walls with a sensation like that I experience at this moment.”

“ What can make our poor Ulmeri ill,” said Rectzizi, “ since she is now assured of your existence ? unless indeed she is sick with impatience to see her sweet friend !”

M 6

“ Ah !

"Ah! I would that were all," returned Phedora, "as I should then chase away the malady to-morrow morning inevitably."

She uttered this hastily; then fearing the renewed opposition of Cassimir to her project, she turned the conversation upon their mutual friends, the Lumerskis and Mr. Leuhaupt, by enquiring if he could conjecture on what occasion they had been called from Warsaw. The probable one of Lumerski following his regiment, which he imagined to be the case, was instantly adopted by her; "yet why," thought Phedora, "did their father too leave the house of Baron Hartfen, where he had engaged to wait the return of the family, to begin the office he had so readily consented to undertake?"

It was evening before Rectzizi would suffer his lovely companion to quit him; they rambled together, unconscious of lassitude, amidst the mountains and woody glens that

surround Konigstein : the castle which Cassimir kept in sight, was their guide in returning : it was visible from almost every spot they strayed to, and appeared to Phedora to reprove her for those sentiments of tenderness her unexpected meeting with Rectzizi had too forcibly revived. He told her, that a very important obstacle to his happiness was removed by his succession to the estates of his grandfather, without any of those conditions he had feared the possession of them would have been clogged with, and which, rather than fulfil, he would have given up the inheritance, and relinquished all title to it.

Phedora had learnt from the Baronefs what these conditions were, and the delicacy of Cassimir, in forbearing to mention them, procured him a look of such unequivocal approbation, that in a transport of love and hope, he affirmed that he had no doubt of finally obtaining not only the content but  
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the wishes of his family to be allied to their beloved Rubenski.

“Oh no, no!” exclaimed Phedora, raising her eyes to the castle, “do not inspire me with such presumptuous ideas! If I weakly listen to them, I shall be unable to see your mother without shame and contrition.”

“You are too scrupulous, my gentle Phedora,” said Rectzizi; “you have no wealth, it is true, but I have now enough, and much more than we could possibly spend, even if we exceed the habits of moderation in which we have both lived. I can now marry without diminishing the portion of Ulmeri, or the expectations of my brother, by requiring pecuniary aid of my father to establish me according to my rank.”

“Ah that rank,” cried Phedora, “is high in society, and mine is low!”

“I did not mean,” interrupted he, “to have uttered that foolish word: we will not cavil about it however, since exalted or  
otherwise,

otherwise, we can have but one rank when we are united."

"Ah, Reetzizi!" said she, pointing to the castle with an expressive look :—"but the twilight is coming on, and I must return to the cottage, or nurse and our poor old hostess will be extremely uneasy."

As they walked to it, Cassimir told her that he had left his servant at Pirna, and had engaged for himself the most habitable part of a little tenement in a village he pointed out to her, about half a mile from the fort ; intending, before he heard of the friendly efforts of the Baron, to wait an opportunity of seeing and learning from his family what was their imputed offence.

At the cottage door he quitted Phedora, entreating that she would not go to the castle in the morning without previously seeing him, promising to be at the place where he had dined by the first dawn of day, and engaging her to meet him there.—She was obliged to assent to this request, and he then bade her adieu.

CHAP.



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C H A P. VI.

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—————"Here she comes !

"In the calm harbour of whose gentle breast

"My tempest-beaten soul may safely rest."

—————"Whate'er my sorrows be,

"They cease and vanish on beholding thee."

PHEDORA found Michael impatiently waiting to deliver a message from the Lieutenant which appointed her attendance at his apartment immediately after night fall, because his plan had been necessarily changed, and if she still wished to see the prisoners, she must not lose an opportunity he should not have it in his power perhaps to renew in her favour.

"Oh Heavens !" exclaimed Phedora, forgetting every thing but the satisfaction she felt

felt at the idea of the approaching meeting, "let us fly this moment, lest we be too late!"

"Yes, fly," cried the old woman, who heard the animated sentence—"fly, obstinate girl, to your destruction."

"I hope not," returned she, alarmed at the solemnity of voice in which the apostrophe was uttered: "be not displeased, good mother, that I appear to disregard your kind injunctions."

"Where are you going to?" asked the old woman: "why do you run out to hide yourself from the eyes of those who see that you wish to stray, and would fain pull you back? Do you think I can see such a young creature, all so fair and innocent, going to ruin just the same way as poor Mathe, and hold my tongue? No, no, I shall drink no more of that man's wine; for I know he will lure you from your friends, to drag you over the wide world, and leave you when he gets to the end of it."

"If such is his intention," replied Phedora, "he will certainly be disappointed, dear  
mother

mother. You are tired—let me give you your supper, and assist you to bed, as your Mathe was accustomed to do.”

The old woman shook her head and muttered, but complied with this request: and the gratitude of Phedora was so strongly excited by her anxious affection, that it enabled her to overcome her impatience to be gone till she had performed every little tender office for the poor abandoned parent, her misfortunes, age, and infirmities required.

It was then quite dark, and Phedora, conducted by Michael, and accompanied by nurse, sat out for the fort.

“ I hope,” thought she, as she followed the cautious steps of her guide up the narrow winding path, “ those words of our old hostess were not a prediction: should I be flying to meet destruction, I shall no more behold the generous Cassimir. I told him,  
continued

continued she mentally, that I would not go to the castle until I had seen him in the morning—and perhaps he will be displeased that I have broken my word: yet to keep this promise, and hazard the not seeing my poor Ulmeri, who wishes so earnestly for an interview, my affection will not submit to. My own destruction! If it is no more—if no other is involved in it—but it may not be so—they were words uttered in the vexation and anger of the moment; poor Mathe was in her head.”

“Michael,” cried nurse, “what is that light, so close just over us, as though ’twas like to drop upon us?”

“Why don’t you see,” said Stabinsk, “it is in the fort.”

“A light in the fort!” exclaimed she; “save the man! why the castle don’t hang just over us like a grenadier’s cap on a peg!”

“Yes, I tell you,” replied her husband, “it always does in the dark.”

“Jesus!” cried nurse, quaking, “as if the castle could jump and skip over the rock as it liked!”

“Hold

“ Hold your tongue,” said Michael, “ or the centinels on the ramparts will hear you: when they give the *qui va là*, don’t you answer, but let me answer.”

The caution was exactly in time, and nurse very fortunately attended to it: this effort of prudence brought them to the great court of the castle, where Langhorts himself waited to conduct the females to his apartment. Nothing was now to be seen in the long archways save a few solitary lamps stuck up at intervals, which appeared to lengthen the gloomy avenues they partially illuminated, and served to render darkness itself distinguishable to the eye, and thus as it were embodying its horrors. Phedora repeated to herself, “ Am I indeed flying to my destruction? Good Heaven! is this an abode for the timid Ulmeri!”

Whilst such reflections as these occurred to her, loud shouts of revelry and intoxication sounded on her shrinking ear from an  
apartment

apartment they were passing: the boisterous laugh, and loud clamour of voices, all rising at the same moment, together with the roar of triumph, and the indignant appeal in the highest tone of rage, contrasted with the gloomy scene she was then exploring, seemed to the terrified imagination of Phedora the uproar of maniacs, or infernal spirits. Langhertz caught her hand, and drew her forward: "Hasten on," cried he, "I would not have you seen at this instant by any of my companions."

When they had quitted the passage, and passed into another, "For your service," said he, "lovely Phedora, I have stolen from the mirth of my friends: I was much affected by the earnestness of your supplication, and I expect that your gratitude will be proportioned to the satisfaction, I incur so much danger to procure you. The governor, with whom I am in considerable favour, and who is indeed my relation, has consented, at my representation, that the female prisoners  
should

should have a woman to attend them during the sickness of the younger lady : but this person is not afterwards to quit the castle, and he has himself appointed a woman for the purpose. She enters upon her office to-morrow—to-night you must personate her, and as the corridors are dark, and the sentinels unsuspicious, for my name and presence will banish doubt and impertinent curiosity, you will pass very well."

Phedora trembled with eagerness to be already in the arms of her friends ; but the Lieutenant obliged her to stay at his apartment whilst nurse was instructed to cram her wavy locks under a covering, and throw a sort of mantle round her, that hid her figure. Langhortz then took her hand, and led her forward, but Michael's wife was forbidden to follow, to her great mortification and terror : Stabinsk however, accompanied them, and Phedora felt more assured from his presence, for the time, the place and the society of a man of whom she had not the best



best opinion, shook her heart with fear ; and this trepidation encreased when Langhartz avowed, without reserve, the motive which had actuated him to gratify her earnest petition ; and now that it was too late to refuse the obligation she trembled to owe him, and impossible to escape from his solicitations, she learnt that she was indebted to his love for what she had almost compelled herself to think was the offspring of compassion, and that he fully expected a return of affection for a benefit she could not otherwise repay. ]

She stopped precipitately at this intimation, and would even have turned back, but Langhartz would not permit her : he called to a centinel, at the same time desiring her to advance in a tone of authority she did not dare to disobey. They were now in the corridor, and the Lieutenant, to impose silence on Phedora, spoke to each centinel as he passed.

They

They soon reached the cell of the Countess and Ulmeri, and the ardent and affectionate Phedora forgot her scruples and her fears.

“Remember,” said Langhertz, in a low voice, as he unlocked the door, “what I expect of you—remember too, that you are from this moment in my power.”

A dreadful apprehension struck across the mind of Phedora as he spoke, an apprehension that had ultimately for its object the safety of Cassimir. All was darkness within the cell, in which there was a quietness, a stillness she could not account for, had the place been occupied by two people. A sickness came over her, and she repeated, “I have been flying to meet destruction!”

She was much relieved however, by seeing Michael enter with a lamp, which he set down, and hastily withdrew. She heard the door fastened on the outside, and again her spirits wholly forsook her. It was some moments

moments before she recovered recollection enough to take up the lamp, which she held above her head to survey the place she was in. Again the blood rushed to her heart, and again it retreated—for in a recess she discerned the appearance of a couch, and stretched upon it, two figures.

“The Countess and my Ulmeri,” exclaimed Phedora hastily: “but oh Heaven! they are silent.”

She drew near them in a trepidation that made the light shake in her hand, and set it down lest it should be extinguished, then hanging in an agony of grief and horror over the bed, called alternately to her young friend and to Madame Reclizi.

“Who speaks?” said the Countess, starting up in the confused terror of a person suddenly awakened from a deep sleep.

“Your Phedora,” cried the trembling girl, throwing her arms round her with reviving joy.

“ Ah! my mother,” said Ulmeri in a faint voice, “ are my senses rambling, or do I dream ?”

“ No, my child,” replied the Countess, “ our dear Phedora is with us—in my arms; but how she was conveyed here, unless by the interference of Heaven to soothe our inquietudes, I cannot guess.”

“ Beloved Ulmeri !” cried Phedora, “ gentle, suffering friend ! your poor Rubenski is come to implore you to conquer this malady, and hope for a quick restoration to liberty and happiness through the zeal of the good Baron.”

“ Is it indeed Phedora,” asked she, “ is it our Rubenski ? Let me look at your countenance, and I shall be convinced. I heard your accents—Yes,” continued she, bursting into tears, “ it is indeed Phedora : I am now satisfied that the voice I listened to was yours.”

“ Be composed, dear simple girl,” said the Countess, embracing Ulmeri and her friend with an equal tenderness of manner ;

“ and

“and suffer our Rubenski to tell us by what unhoped-for miracle we have now the power of informing her how much and sincerely we mourned her supposed death:—give her time to tell us what strange event brought her to Konigstein, made her acquainted with our unmerited disgrace, and waisted the intelligence to the ear of the Baron?”

Phedora, in compliance with this intimation, hastily run over the circumstances which had led to her present situation, beginning with her deliverance, by her name-fake Rubenski. When she mentioned her meeting with the Leuhaupts at Warsaw, Ulmeri exclaimed, “Oh how much I long to be known to your charming Catherine! does she resemble her—her father?”

“Why should you be interested in that enquiry,” said the Countess, “since you have never seen Mr. Leuhaupt?”

“No—it is true—I never beheld him,” returned Ulmeri; “but I am well acquainted

quainted with his character, and you know how infinitely I admire it."

Phedora then continued her narrative, and brought it with all the expedition she could make, down to the moment of her recognising Cassimir a few hours back.

"How! my son here?" cried Madame Rectzizi.

"Yes, Madam," replied Phedora, deeply blushing; "but he knew not that I should be compelled to alter the destined time of this much-desired meeting, and I am ignorant of the intelligence he might have wished to communicate to you, through me."

"Do you know," asked the Countess, "if he has been in Luthuania?"

When this question was replied to, so many others succeeded to it, that Phedora found herself obliged to acknowledge, what a half apprehensive consciousness had induced her almost unintentionally to suppress, that  
Cassimir

Cassimir was at Warsaw whilst she was herself there. Madame Rectzizi gazed with a fixed expression upon her varying countenance, and her voice faltered on remarking that the jealous interrogation of the Countess was accompanied by glances from which kindness and friendship were in some degree banished : her confusion was however only momentary, for the very observation that heightened it for an instant, as suddenly restored her to more than her accustomed energy of mind.

“ Do not, dearest Madam,” cried she with firmness, “ wound my soul with suspicions I have not deserved ! Look not thus upon me with reprehensive severity ; but believe me when I assert, that I am yet the Phedora from whom you parted with a tenderness and condescension no conduct of mine shall voluntarily forfeit.”

“ I do believe you,” returned the Countess : “ to your simple affirmation I give implicit credence. Pardon me, sweet girl, that I did



not better discriminate the cause of that little hesitation my own too apparent surmises gave rise to."

Madame Reetzizi continued however, to question her, until every circumstance that had occurred, and every solicitation of her son was either known or guessed at. When she had ended her examination, she embraced Phedora with a sudden emotion of admiration and fondness, and after a pause of a few seconds, resumed the conversation upon another topic.

Phedora expressed an apprehension that she disturbed the repose of her young friend, but Ulmeri declared herself much revived by her presence, and refused any longer to be considered as an invalid. The Countess said they had enjoyed two or three hours of repose before it had been so pleasantly interrupted.

"This

“ This silly child,” added she, “ was seized with such a panic at the unexpected voice of our Rubenski, that it affected her health, and until this evening we have not tasted much repose since the moment in which we first recognised it.

Phedora uttered an exclamation of regret and sorrow at this circumstance ; but the Countess, who was now at leisure to reflect upon the method by which Phedora could have obtained the present interview, interrupted her to have it more particularly explained : she then cautioned her against the very apparent motives of this courtesy in the Lieutenant.

“ I would rather,” said she, “ forego the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you, than suffer you to incur any further obligation to this man ; beware of him, my good Rubenski, and let not your affectionate solicitude for us throw you thus into his power.”

She would not alarm Madame Rectzizi by relating the offensive part of his conduct, but hastened to lose the subject, by naming the Count, and enquiring how long he had been wholly taken from them. The question was scarcely answered, when the door of the cell was unfastened, and Langhorts appeared to tell her that she must immediately quit it. Phedora started—his conversation, as he conducted her from his own apartment, too faithfully recurred to his, and the conclusion the Countess had so recently drawn from her half-suppressed account of him, pointed her terror.

“Is my uncle there?” asked she in a trembling voice.

“Yes,” he replied, taking her hand to lead her away.

“Where—where is her uncle?” demanded the Countess, with a look he seemed to understand.

“At the end of the corridor,” replied he peevishly; “but I have not time for such minute enquiries.”

“Remember,”

“Remember,” resumed Madame Rectzizi, “that this young person has friends, who though they may be at this moment unable to watch over her, are much interested in her welfare and will not calmly hear that any premeditated injury has been intended her. We thank you for this indulgence—it will not perhaps remain unrequited.—Conduct the good girl in safety to her relations, and recollect, Sir, that she has powerful friends who are not encompassed by the walls of Konigstein.”

The Lieutenant appeared embarrassed, and made no reply : he allowed Phedora however, to embrace the prisoners.

“Tell my son Cassimir,” said the Countess in a whisper, “not to attempt an interview, nor adventure any thing rashly. Tell him I do not much blame him for what has passed at Warsaw and here, because I admire and love Phedora.”

Langhartz became extremely jealous of the length of these injunctions, which his conscience rendered suspicious to him, and hurried away his blushing and unwilling charge, whose thoughts were wholly engrossed by the latter part of Madame Rectzizi's speech ; nor did she transfer them to her own immediate situation until the officer stooped before a door he endeavoured to open. He had not a light with him ; but the twilight, which shone through a high window, discovered to Phedora that this was a passage she had not been in before : she looked round her at this reflection, for Michael—he was not to be seen, and she recollected that the Lieutenant had said he was at the end of the corridor : he appeared hurried and anxious to unfasten the door, but his trepidation and haste retarded his wishes, and he muttered half pronounced curses upon his own awkwardness, and the confounded lock.

Phedora trembled, and dreading to be forced into this strange place, where she was

convinced neither Michael nor his wife could be, she suddenly run up the passage with swiftnefs, and at the same moment heard the step of Langhorts in pursuit of her: he called to her, but in a low voice, and her flight became still more rapid. At the turning of the passage hung a lamp almost extinguished: she had not time for accurate observation; but as she was hastening forward, a dying flash of light showed her several steps in a steep descent: terrified at the danger she had missed so narrowly, she clung to the wall as she advanced more cautiously, and found that it turned to the right, apparently into another avenue, which she followed as more safe than the descent. Here she was wholly in obscurity, and heard the Lieutenant almost immediately behind her: finding it impossible to escape him if she still pressed forward, she shrunk close to the wall, and held in her breath, in the hope that he would pass her: she was not deceived in this supposition; and as he darted by, she distinguished, amidst his sullen to-

liloquy, an execration that made her shudder. Whilst she was congratulating herself upon the success of her little stratagem, she heard Langhorts fall with a violence almost inconceivable, and a screaming instantly ensued, most evidently issuing from a female throat.

“ Who the devil are you—what are you lying there for ?” exclaimed the Lieutenant in a tone of rage, almost subdued by pain.

“ Oh Jesus, I’m half killed !” replied a voice in the accents of nurse, “ I’m bruised to death ! But where is this sweet young creature,” continued she, interrupting her own lamentation, and pitching her voice in a lower tone of whining, “ where is my husband’s niece ?”

“ C—se you and your niece too,” replied he with a groan.

“ Where is she,” cried nurse ; “ did not you promise to bring her back ?”

Phedora



Phedora then heard a door open, and from a light that came through the aperture, saw the Lieutenant entering his own apartment near which poor nurse was sitting : but when the good woman perceived that he was quitting her without replying to her question, she started up very nimbly, and followed him repeating the enquiry. Phedora hoped that Langhertz would dismiss her in a rage ; and whilst she was hesitating whether she should await this, or discover herself immediately to Michael's wife, a rough voice and quick step behind her, impelled her to advance and seek protection by the side of the faithful creature, who was still importuning the angry Lieutenant. The person followed her into the apartment, where the morning dawn, breaking through a large casement opposite the door, gave to her view the unlucky Langhertz staunching a stream of blood that ran copiously from the side of his head, and poor nurse, with a violent contusion between her eyes, already discoloured, and extremely swelled.

The

The stranger gazed with marks of astonishment at the Lieutenant, and enquired the meaning of the outcry he had heard, and the strange scene he now witnessed.

“The meaning, please you, is this,” replied nurse, curtsying very low, in honour of the air of authority with which the interrogator spoke : “he tumbled over me in the passage, and his heels came against my forehead : so I being asleep, and dreaming of wars, as a soldier’s wife is like enough to do, thought that a cannon shot, please you, had taken my head away ; and as a body would naturally cry out in such a case, I began to scream ——”

“Peace !” exclaimed Langhertz, who dreaded her indiscretion, and besides wished her to remove Phedora from the notice of the stranger : “the woman is drunk surely ; I shall speak to your husband to-morrow.”

He then pushed her to the door, and in answer to her reiterated enquiries for her  
niece,

niece, pointed to Phedora, who had again retreated into the passage, and shut them both out. Nurse was beginning to express her joy at finding her, but her timid companion entreated her to be silent, and hasten from the castle.

“ I don’t think,” replied Michael’s wife, “ that we can get away before the gates are opened.”

“ Oh Heaven !” exclaimed Phedora, “ must we then stay here—are there no means of escaping before sun-rise ?”

“ I will enquire of the centinels for Michael,” said nurse ; “ perhaps he could get us out.”

Phedora earnestly wished he might ; for she recollected that Rectzizi had appointed to meet her at day-break near the cottage door, and she dreaded lest he should be induced, by fears for her safety, to follow her to the castle, if he discovered that she had been there from the preceding evening.

The

The effect of the contact between the heels of Langhertz and the face of poor nurse, now became insupportably painful; one of her eyes was entirely closed, and she was unable, from the anguish she felt, to open the other, or raise her head to discover which way they were going. Phedora led her by the hand, shocked and terrified to observe that the tumour visibly encreased every moment in size, and deepened in colour. On her memory alone now depended their safe passage through the various archways and turnings, which were but faintly lighted by the coming day, and from whence it was often wholly excluded: but Phedora's mind was too much agitated to retain a proper recollection of the objects, which, had she been more at ease, would have guided her without difficulty to the great court. She paused, and hearing a quick step near her, was seized with an involuntary tremor at the sound: she soon discovered however, that it was only the movement of a centinel to and fro. Cheered by the hope of being conducted

ducted from the castle, she hurried towards him, and forgetting the character she was to sustain, put a piece of money into his hand, entreating at the same time his assistance.

The man looked earnestly at her, and the money alternately.

“Oh ho !” cried he, in a manner between jest and reproach, “you don’t want to be shown the way to your uncle Stabinsk now ; if you only stop at the Lieutenant’s door, he shows you the way himself. Silver too !— Well well, some women, rather than be an honest foldier’s wife——”

“What is the man talking of?” cried nurse, raising her head ; “who pretends to say I an’t Michael’s wife ? If you go to say that, I’ll pull the castle walls about your ears !”

“Why save you, dame Stabinsk,” said the man : “I didn’t say it : but if I had, these walls have stood many a storm, and I don’t

don't quite think your tongue can out-work 'em all."

Shocked as Phedora had been at his surmises, she overcame her disgust so far as to renew her petition.

"You would not tell me," cried the centinel, "if you was going away from Konigstein; but I never bear ill-will, so I'll show you as far as I can: but mind, you can't get away till the gates are opened."

This was an unwelcome confirmation of the intimation nurse had given: however, she was glad to hasten from the centinel, whose suspicions so plainly hinted, were too dreadful to be heard with patience.—The disaster of Michael's wife failed not to attract his observation, and was honoured with a few coarse witticisms, which much provoked the displeasure of Phedora: but nurse herself was only to be roused from her fallen endurance of the pain she felt, by what she

she understood to be a most slanderous insinuation against her character.

At length they arrived at the great court, and Phedora sat down under the last archway she had passed, to await their liberation: her anxiety could not prevent her however, from bestowing the most tender attention to poor nurse, whose head rested on her knees, and whose sufferings were diminished by her gentle sollicitude. As the morning advanced, the soldiers of the fort began to move about, and the situation of Michael's wife and her beautiful companion, excited universal surprise and enquiry. Stabinsk himself was soon amongst the number of visitors, by whom the distressed Phedora was surrounded: his countenance evinced the irritation of his mind; but the curiosity and raillery of his comrades could not extort from him a syllable to gratify either.— He raised poor nurse from the ground, and led her to a place less liable to observation, where he examined the contusion she had received



received, and bathed it with water, the only liquid he could procure. When the castle gates were unlocked, Michael, at the hazard of a severe discipline, stole out with his wife and Phedora, and conducted them in profound silence to the foot of the rock: he was then obliged to hasten back, leaving nurse to the sole care of her young friend, who led her to their little habitation.

Before the door of the cottage, Phedora observed Cassimir walking to and fro with a quick and disordered step: his eyes were fixed on the ground, and he did not perceive her till she was within a few paces of him.—The recollection of his mother's parting speech brought a heightened colour into her cheeks, but the first view of his countenance chased it away with much greater celerity.—He advanced to meet her with an air of anger wholly unchecked.

“You have deceived me,” exclaimed he,  
“with an artfulness I could scarcely believe  
Phedora

Phedora Rubenski to have been guilty of, did not her mien at this moment confirm all I have heard."

"You are indeed deceived," replied she, timidly, "but not by me: suffer me to assist Michael's wife into the cottage, and I will explain what appears wrong in my conduct."

The humanity of Rectzizi was interested in this proposition, and he aided her to lead poor nurse, but with a mind too much pre-occupied to allow him sufficient curiosity to enquire into the cause of her disastrous situation. She was then placed upon her bed, and left to her repose at her own particular desire, notwithstanding the verbal arrangements of old Whempski their hostess, who though she was not able to second the attentions of Phedora, insisted upon directing them, without any regard to her ability of fulfilling the various instructions she gave.

Cassimir then drew Phedora to the cottage door; but she had already perceived, by the manner

manner in which Mathé's grandmother addressed him, that this had not been their first interview. The reason of his angry deportment towards her she now guessed to proceed from the volubility of the old woman, who had infused her own ideas into the mind of Rectzizi : half terrified at the prospect of combating his prejudices against her sincerity, and half indignant at the credulous haste with which he had imbibed sentiments so degrading to her rectitude of mind, she followed him to the spot where he had dined the preceding day in such tranquil happiness.

“Now,” cried Rectzizi hastily, “tell me—explain to me what I cannot, I confess, comprehend in your conduct?”

Phedora, much hurt at the interrogation itself, and the manner in which it was made, burst into tears, and remained silent.

Perhaps I am wrong,” resumed he, softened by her distress; yet circumstances could

could not so combine to mislead the judgment without—tell me however, have you not been cautioned by that poor honest old creature of the designs of this Langhertz?" She confessed she had. "Why," said Rectzizi, "did you so sedulously endeavour to prevent me from seeing her, and why did you inform me that you were to visit the castle this morning, when you were conscious of an intention of going there last night?"

Phedora, equally grieved and mortified at the accusations implied in the questions, made no attempt to reply, but walked towards the cottage.

"You told me a few minutes since," cried he, detaining her, "that you would explain all this."

"I would explain my conduct," replied she, drying her eyes, "to those doubts which circumstances might perhaps justify; but not to positive charges of duplicity, falsehood, and the weakest, as well as most culpable of vanity,

vanity, that of rejecting the advice of age and wisdom, and spurning the solicitude of friendship. I have seen the Countess," continued she, interrupting the reply he was making, "and your sister, who is recovering from her indisposition: Madame Rectzizi desired me to entreat you in her name not to undertake any thing rashly, but to await the decision of Baron Hartfen's application."

"I mean it," replied Cassimir: "and now condescend to dissipate all my suspicions;—point out to me by what means I have been deceived into an opinion that injured that sweet ingenuousness and veracity I have always so much admired."

Phedora felt some of her indignation subside at this entreaty, made with suppliant humility, and she related the unexpected message Michael had brought to her the preceding evening, and her consequent earnestness to profit by the only opportunity that appeared likely to offer of seeing the Countess and Ulmeri. This explanation annihilated

annihilated the principal part of his charge ; and the candid confession of her fears, lest the teasing animadversions of the old woman should produce more arguments against adventuring a visit to the beloved prisoners, though it did not convince him that she had acted according to the rigid dictates of prudence, at least banished some very troublesome ideas from his mind. He enquired very minutely how far the good woman had been right in supposing the friendship of Langhertz more self-interested than he had at first avowed ; and Phedora acknowledged, with many blushes and some apprehension, that he had spoken to her of rewarding the danger he incurred for her satisfaction.

“ You should not have been induced by any consideration,” said Reetzizi warmly, “ to be indebted to this man for the most trifling obligation : no service you could render Ulmeri would compensate for the alarm and terror such a wretch would delight in making you suffer, independant of the

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danger of placing yourself entirely in his power."

Phedora felt the full force of this assertion, and silently acquiesced in it; whilst Cassimir, correcting the vehemence of his accent, proceeded to enquire how she had been introduced to the Countess and his sister. She repeated with delight, the kindness of Madame Rectzizi, after she had hastily informed him of her momentary fears on entering the cell, and then remarked that the painful incertitude of Ulmeri, as to the reality of her existence, had been the chief cause of her indisposition.

"How then can I repent," added Phedora, "my earnest and unconquerable inclination to see her, since it has calmed her mind, or at least relieved it from a very perplexing idea? Do not however, renew your reproaches," said she, smiling; "for by the condescending advice of the Countess, I will  
not



not procure myself any more lectures, by going near the castle gates till I hear from the Baron—if he brings or sends good news, I shall not be restrained from flying up the rock to be one of the first to communicate it—if the contrary, I will contrive, if possible, to share the captivity I shall ever deplore.”

“ Ah Phedora !” cried he, “ would you indeed, in that case, add to my affliction, by secluding yourself entirely from me ? But let us not imagine what I trust will never happen—I am pleased that you have no intention of attempting a second interview ; for I cannot endure the idea of your being exposed to the machinations of that Langhertz, from which you must be sensible neither Michael nor his wife could shield you. You have not told me by what accident she has suffered so severely ?”

Phedora, dreading to awaken his anger by mentioning the alarm that had impelled her to fly from her perfidious conductor,

merely said that poor nurse had fallen into a profound sleep whilst she was with her friends, and on her return from them, the Lieutenant had stumbled against her at the door of his apartment, which she had chosen as the place of her repose, and they had mutually suffered from the shock.

She now recollected that she ought to enquire into the situation of the good woman, from whom she had been absent more than an hour, and Rectzizi did not oppose her charitable intention, especially as she informed him she would venture to invite him into the cottage to breakfast, as he had already introduced himself to their old hostess.

This hint induced Cassimir to entreat her forgiveness for the reproaches he had so hastily and unadvisedly uttered; and Phedora, having accorded it with her usual sweetness of temper, their reconciliation became complete. They found nurse just risen, and much refreshed by the repose she had

had enjoyed : she was not to be restrained from doing the honours of the breakfast table ; and the anxious old Whempski amused herself during the repast, with chiding her young friend, and admonishing her against all mankind, not even excepting Rectzizi, who silently admired the patience of his lovely Rubenski, and her sollicitude to accommodate and please a woman almost a stranger to her, and to whose indiscreet prattle she owed the uneasiness she had suffered but a few moments before.

At length nurse recollected that Phedora had passed the night without rest, and advised her to follow the example she had set, from which she assured her she had herself found great benefit : and Rectzizi, having seconded the request by an entreaty not to neglect herself, immediately withdrew, to wander over the walk they had taken the preceding day.

Phedora then threw herself on her little bed, and her eyes closed in spite of the pleasing images that occupied her mind : it was a considerable time after, that the voice of Michael, in the other division of the cottage, awakened her, and starting up, she observed the sun already declining. Eager to converse with honest Stabinsk before he saw Rectzizi, she run to him, and learnt that his loud accent was occasioned by a fall of passion, which had seized him in relating that the Lieutenant had contrived to intoxicate him after he had conducted Phedora to the cell of the prisoners, and that his recollection had forsaken him, until he was roused by one of his comrades with the news of his wife's disaster. The laws of subordination chained his hands, when his indignation pointed to vengeance for the treachery so evidently intended ; yet they would perhaps have been insufficient, had he not discovered that the injury his wife had received had been unintentional, and that their mutual charge, Phedora, had wholly escaped the snare. She  
drew

drew poor Michael aside, to inform him that Captain Rectzizi was then lingering near the fort, in expectation of the Baron's return : " and as he participates," added Phedora, " in the general good-will of his family towards me, suffer him, good Stabinsk, to remain ignorant of the extent of your suspicions concerning this Langhortz."

Michael, who possessed much natural sense and discrimination, immediately conceived the necessity of this precaution ; and moderating the rage that had governed him, affected, in the presence of his wife and the old woman, to retract the opinion he had betrayed, and even gave out, that now he was cooler, and thought better of it, he supposed the Lieutenant had made him drunk for a frolic. The suspicious Whempski shook her head with her usual incredulity, and muttered ; but nurse thought entirely with her husband, because she imagined Langhortz had faithfully reconducted Phedora to her.

Stabinsk returned to the fort with less of rancour in his heart, since he had learnt the entire discomfiture of the Lieutenant's plan: he was encountered near the cottage door by Cassimir, who guessed his name, and entered into conversation with him: but warned by the precaution of Phedora, and well convinced this could be no other than Captain Rectzizi, he answered his enquiries in a manner that dissipated all the remaining uneasiness which in her absence had revisited the mind of Cassimir. Fearful of being seen with Stabinsk, he then left him, to enquire if Phedora had taken the repose he had advised: she had just assisted the old woman to the door as he reached it, and he thought he had never beheld her half so engaging.—Mathé's grandmother was expatiating, with great eloquence, upon the misfortune of being handsome, which she said had been the destruction of her poor child; whereas she herself, having been homely in her youth, had never drawn upon her the eyes of wild gentlemen and idle soldiery; and so she got married

married quietly in her own village, because she worked hard and spent none.

This abridged, yet genuine history, heightened the natural smile that adorned the countenance of Phedora when her mind was at ease, and her comments were made in a strain of vivacity that compelled old Whempski to forget her cares for the moment, and join in the sportive humour of her fair companion ; when lo ! on raising her eyes towards the castle, she discovered what was now to her an object of habitual alarm—a man, extremely occupied in gazing upon his prey, a lovely young woman.

“ There, there ! ” exclaimed Whempski, “ I see there is no peace for me : now that I have taken to you, as if you was my own child, and you have taken to me, God bless you ! as if I was your natural mother, here comes one to lure you away, and make us both unhappy.”



“ Do not make so hasty a conclusion,” said Cassimir laughing : “ be not so unconscionable, good mother, as to insist that our little friend must of necessity be unhappy, because she quits you to follow me. Do not be uneasy however, upon this subject, for I promise you, when I run away with your lovely Phedora, you shall be the companion of our journey.”

“ Aye, aye,” replied Whempski, “ to be left behind in the first bog, I suppose, and then you would be jeering, jeering at the old fool.”

“ Can you think this of me ?” asked Phedora, composing her features.

“ Not of *you*, perhaps,” returned she pointedly.

“ But of me you do,” cried Cassimir ;—  
“ and to punish you, I will lead away Phedora, and not return with her these two hours.”

Phedora would have resisted the execution of this threat ; but her own inclination lead-

ing to the Pirna road, and a recollection of the pleasant walk they had had the preceding day, treacherously subdued her compassion for the fretful anger of Mathé's grandmother, and at length she quietly accompanied Rectzizi, who conducted her to the spot, commanding a view of Sonnenstein castle, and of the way through which the receding wheels of the Baron's chaise had rolled. Their subjects were interesting, but Phedora never lost sight of the declaration she had made to the Countess.

They might again have wandered till twilight came on, had not poor nurse discovered their route by the most indefatigable search, to remind Phedora that she had not dined, and to tell her that she had prepared something for the gentleman and her, for she supposed he was not better off than herself. Cassimir smiled at this remark, and privately settled with nurse that he would dine every day at the cottage, whilst he remained at Konigstein, if she could prevail with old

Whempski to consent to the plan, and Phedora did not oppose it : he refused however, to avail himself of her frank invitation for the present, and parted with his fair companion at the cottage door. Her hostess was quite indignant at her unexpected desertion, and would scarcely answer her salutation, though she had felt equally anxious with nurse that she might not lose her dinner.

At sun-set, Michael again made his appearance ; and with a face of apprehension for the event, informed Phedora that the Lieutenant had desired him to tell her, if she would be at the castle at the beginning of the third watch, she should see the prisoners once more. She hardly allowed him time to finish the sentence, before she declined the proposal very decisively, and the countenance of honest Stabinski cleared up in a moment. He expressed his satisfaction at her determination, which he said prevented a great deal of mischief, though it was not rightly his place to advise.

Michael

Michael then trudged back, endeavouring to form his features to a sober gravity, and to dismiss the air of extreme satisfaction he was conscious they wore; for now that his choler was entirely subsided, he was not willing to incur the malicious resentment of Langhorts, if he could have avoided it.—Phedora was not without fears for the result of her refusal to accept the proffered favour of the Lieutenant: she reflected however, that in declining it, she acted with the judgment of the Countess and Rectzizi; and indeed, after all that had passed, she acknowledged to herself, that it would have been courting danger to venture again to the castle. Part of the night was spent in conjecturing what would probably be the length of the good Baron's absence; in taxing her imagination to produce reasons that could induce Mr. Leuhaupt to quit Warsaw; and in wondering what her own destiny would be when the Count Rectzizi and his family were released, and returned to Poland. The friendship of the Baroness offered her a pleasing

sing asylum under her protection ; but her gratitude to the Reetzisis, who amidst many benefits, had procured her this one, suggested to her that they had acquired a right to direct and govern her conduct ; and if, as she suspected, the Count and Countess should think her residence with Madame Hartsen would throw her too frequently in the way of their son Cassimir, she thought herself compelled to relieve their anxiety, by voluntarily withdrawing from a society where he might seek her, should he continue to wish an impossibility in wishing to unite his fate to hers.

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C H A P. VII.

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—————" I'll not waste my curses ;  
" No, they shall be all carefully reserv'd  
" For this detested rival.—Whoe'er he be,  
" May Fortune seem to smile upon their wishes ;  
" Secure of disappointment, may she then  
" Sever their loves, and tear them from each other."

THE morning almost dawned before Phedora lost her unquiet reflections in a slumber, and the sun had visited her little chamber, long before its beams playing over her face, awoke her. The voice of nurse, who had been much more matinal, made her hasten her appearance in the front of the cottage, in the idea that she was speaking to Rectzizi : but she found her parleying with a soldier from the fort, and fearing some message or present from Langhorts, she drew back on discovering the unwelcome visitor,  
and

and remained in her own chamber till nurse called her to breakfast.

“ Heré has been a fellow,” cried the good woman, “ wanting to speak with you ; but as I thought he was not upon an honest errand, I told him you was not up ; so he fancied to wait till you was—but, says I, I don’t know when that will be, for she has been up all the night before.”

“ Aye, aye,” says he, “ I know that.”

“ Who did she come from ?” enquired Phedora.

“ Truly,” replied nurse, “ I wanted him to be gone, so I did not ask ; but I suppose from the Lieutenant : by St. Nicholas, if our good old granny had seen him, she would have scolded the whole day, and lamented about her Mathé, which none of us can help, you know.”

Whilst nurse was speaking, a second visitor appeared at the cottage, who was treated with much more courtesy than the first :—  
this



this was Cassimir who enquired very earnestly how Phedora and her friend nurse had rested.

“ Oh thank you kindly,” replied Michael’s wife, looking pleasant, in spite of her discoloured countenance ; “ but here now is some milk to spare, so don’t think we want.”

He excused himself from accepting her hospitable offer, but sat down to converse with Phedora ; and as nurse would not be excluded from the party, her volubility discovered to Rectzizi, that an embassy had already been sent from the fort : she could not with truth affirm what the purport of it was, but repeated her supposition, that it was not an honest errand.

Cassimir questioned her very minutely concerning the conversation that had passed between the man and herself, but received an account very little satisfactory : he learnt however, that Phedora had been particularly  
enquired

enquired for, and became anxious to know by whom, and for what purpose.

After breakfast nurse withdrew, and as it was not yet old Whempski's time for rising, Phedora was permitted to converse with Rectzizi without the usual ceremony of warning and lamentation. She informed him of the message Stabinsk had brought to her the preceding evening, and he extremely commended her for the negative she had given it.

"I am not authorised by what I have yet heard," added Cassimir, "positively to tax the designs of this man with villainy; yet his conduct is too suspicious not to awaken my fears for my too lovely little friend: I thank Heaven you returned from the castle in safety; had it not been so, I could not answer for what I might have attempted, or how far the mischief might have spread. Let me not, however, lose these delightful moments,

ments, in discussing what were, or what were not the intentions of this Langhortz."

The entrance of the Lieutenant himself interrupted what Rectzizi meant further to say: they started on beholding each other, with a mutual air of hostility. Langhortz was immediately known to Cassimir, from the circumstance of the wound on his head, which Phedora had mentioned, and which, being yet bound up, was sufficiently visible: and though the Lieutenant, on his part, could not possibly divine the name and quality of Rectzizi, yet he was enraged to see Phedora thus socially conversing with a young man, whose appearance was too engaging not to excite jealousy.

Cassimir, highly irritated by his angry glances, rose not from his seat, and a haughtiness wholly unusual to him took possession of his features and manner.

"Your

“Your acquaintance,” said Langhartz, turning sarcastically to Phedora, “seems to be extensive: your uncle Stabinsk surely is very humble, with the patronage he might command, to remain a foot soldier.”

The countenance of Rectzizi portending a severe retort, terrified Phedora, and she prevented his reply by hastily saying, “This gentleman is in the Russian service, and my uncle, you know, in that of Saxony.”

“Whatever information is required relating to me,” cried Cassimir, darting at her a look that made her shrink before him, “I can best give.”

“Most certainly,” returned Langhartz: “by applying immediately to you then, I may perhaps have the honour of knowing if you visit this place merely to see the fortress of Konigstein, or to take a survey of the natural beauties in its neighbourhood.”

“Now we are come to the point,” said Rectzizi; “and I cannot better answer you,  
I

I think, than by desiring you to display your authority for thus questioning me."

"It is not the most respectable one," replied the Lieutenant, "since it is solely the result of your own hint."

Phedora trembled for the event of this skirmish of words—Rectzizi was not, as when the furious Ivan attacked him at Moscow, without a sword; and Langhartz was likewise armed. Her pallid aspect petitioned Cassimir to moderate his anger, and she turned with an expressive gesture towards the castle: he comprehended the motion, and endeavoured to check the rage that was rising to his lips.

Fortunately for the success of the effort, nurse at this moment entered, and directing her eyes towards the marks of discomfiture the head of Langhartz displayed, put her hand up hastily to her own forehead.

"Aye,

“Aye, aye,” cried she, “the stone walls have revenged me sure enough : but why did you not please to tell me that my niece was close behind, when it would have saved so many words ?”

The countenance of the Lieutenant became suddenly suffused at this unexpected interrogation, and his confusion was not unnoticed by Reetzizi, whose suspicions were alarmed at the observation.

“Probably,” cried he with a random supposition, “he did not know it himself.”

Langhörtz instantly concluded that Phedora had revealed the truth to the favoured stranger : such a mark of confidence denoted a facility of intercourse that highly excited his displeasure, and with a heart burning to be revenged, he left the cottage abruptly.

“Ah imprudent !” exclaimed Phedora ; “why did you forget, for an instant, who are immured within those walls !”

“Had

“ Had I not rembered it, my too timid Rubenski,” returned he, “ I should not have suffered that fellow to have quitted the place without the chastisement his insolence so richly merited.”

Nurse was frightened at the vehemence with which this was spoken, and Phedora, who had observed the malicious look of Langhortz as he walked away, shuddered with a more extensive apprehension. The old woman now called to her from within, but she felt unwilling to leave Rectzizi to the hazard of encountering the Lieutenant in the temper of mind they were both in, and extorted from him a promise that he would not leave the cottage till she returned to him.

When she had helped poor Whempski to rise, she assisted her to the front of the cottage where Rectzizi awaited her, who could not avoid admiring anew the amiable tenderness of her nature : but the presence of the  
old



old woman, and her teasing jealousy, prevented any conversation with Phedora, and in a few minutes he arose to depart.

“ You are not going to the castle ? ” cried she, in an agitation of fear.

“ Certainly not,” replied Cassimir : “ if my lovely Phedora thinks I am,” added he, smiling, “ she had better quiet her infidel alarms, by attending my steps.”

Whempski now raised her voice to oppose this intimation ; and to appease her, Rectzizi agreed not to urge it, provided she would suffer him to return and dine at the cottage : an unwilling assent being given to this compromise, he walked away, leaving Phedora the task of recomposing the old woman's spirits. But complacent and gentle as she was, she appeared doomed to give her tetchy friend perpetual uneasiness ; for no sooner was she quietly seated by her side, repairing some of the ravages of time, which, not contented with laying a heavy hand upon her person,

person, had likewise committed uncouth depredations upon the garb that covered it, then the eyes of poor Whempski were again offended, by glancing upon an officer in the uniform of the Saxon guards, standing near the open door, and regarding very devoutly the scene it exhibited. Phedora too looked up, and started with terror, lest the dreaded Langhartz should be returned to seek Rectzizi : but a momentary observation informed her that it was a stranger of a more advanced age, whose voice, when he spoke, gave to her recollection the person she had seen in the apartment of the Lieutenant, at whose appearance he had so hastily dismissed poor nurse and herself.

“ By St. Andrew,” cried the officer, “ Langhartz might well be careful of such a prize ! you are the niece of Stabinsk, are you not ? ”

“ Oh give me patience, holy Mary ! ” exclaimed the old woman ; “ and what if she be ? Can’t you now, one of you, see a girl with a pretty face, but you must send all her  
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friends, and the advice they bestow upon her, clear out of her head, to fill it with notions that will bring her to trouble and sorrow. The blessed martyrs ! if you don't all come about her like so many bees after a wild rose !”

This simile was followed by a hearty laugh, and infinite applause from the stranger, who declared he had not imagined the brain of an old woman could have spun so clever an idea. Even the features of Phedora exhibited a more than usual inclination to smile ; but they quickly recovered from the almost unfelt relaxation, when the officer asked her, with a gay air of freedom, why his messenger had been repulsed, and driven back, without a parley. Phedora made no answer.

“ Was that your doing, mother ?” continued he : “ tell me, is this lovely wild rose your great grand-daughter ?”

“ No,”

“ No,” returned poor Whempski, exalting her voice, “ my poor grandchild was lured away by a villain from that castle.— There you all stand watch, watch—give me patience ! what do you watch for ? Not to take care of yourselves, but to see who you can beguile round the place.”

“ Now I swear to you,” returned he, “ we are a very honest set of fellows at this moment : the last regiment that went out indeed, were not so worthy of praise ; but we are different sort of people—all but a certain Langhorts, good mother, who goes a hunting for wild roses sometimes.”

Nurse, who had been to a village just by for some provisions, now entered the cottage ; but on seeing the officer, she started in terror, and darted away before he perceived her, for his back was towards the door-way. Phedora found her curiosity excited by a conduct so unusual in the good woman, whose behaviour rather approached in general to familiarity than bashfulness, from the

simplicity of a heart unconscious of any offensive intention. Whilst the stranger was endeavouring to learn, from the angry replies of old Whempski, if she was acquainted with the Lieutenant, the eyes of Phedora followed nurse a little way up the rock, where she saw her meet Michael, who was coming to the cottage; and from the short time they remained together, she could scarcely have spoken ten words before he hurried back to the castle with all the speed he could make.

The stranger, turning to Phedora, when he had extracted all the information he required from Whempski, asked her, with an expressive look, if her friends generally returned the visits she favoured them with.

“Oh ho!” continued he, on observing the second entrance of nurse, “if my eyes, and the hue of your forehead, deceive me not, you are the good woman who disturbed my repose two nights since, at the castle;—  
and

and this is your pretty niece, I presume, whose cheeks are not in the least faded by watching, but appear to glow with a very bright hue, merely from the recollection of her adventure."

This mischievous remark was extremely just; for the countenance of Phedora had deepened several tints during his address to nurse, and she was hastily withdrawing from his steady gaze into the back part of the cottage, but he prevented her, by catching her hand.

"Let the child go," cried the old woman indignantly; "she is a good girl, though she does run gadding sometimes—it's a mercy, that amongst you, you let her come back at all."

"A very uncommon mercy, in my opinion," returned the officer; "let her however, sometimes call upon me, good mother, and you shall find that I will be as merciful as my neighbours."

Phedora, extremely displeased with the tenor of his conversation, made another effort to retire, and succeeded : she then anxiously waited till he should think proper to leave the cottage, both on her own immediate account, and because she feared Rectzizi would return and find him there. In ten minutes, nurse run to inform her of his departure.

“ And now,” cried she, “ I must tell you directly, what Michael came just now to say, only that man was here, and he durst not face him.”

“ What was it, good nurse ?” asked Phedora, in a tremor.

“ He says,” replied she, “ that he is sure the Lieutenant has more mischief in his head, and he charged me to take you to some village further from the castle to-morrow morning, for he thinks this Langhorts wants to get you shut up there as a prisoner too ; for one of his comrades heard a word or two of something that passed between him and his uncle the governor, who, they say, is  
going



going to get him made a captain, besides leaving him all his hoards of money when he dies."

"Well—but is Michael sure of what he says?" asked Phedora: "this Langhartz will not be so cruel as to take me away from those whom he supposes to be my relations. Or perhaps," resumed she hastily, "he would suffer me to be with the Countess and her daughter."

"No, no," cried nurse, "that would not do for his purpose: we can all see what he is in such trouble about. Says my husband to me, 'consider my lady Baroness gave this young gentlewoman into your charge.'

"I will think of going away to-morrow," interrupted Phedora: "but do not mention what Michael said to you to Captain Rectzizi: I will endeavour to inform him of it in a way that will not make him more angry with the Lieutenant, for fear there should be mischief, you know, good nurse. But what shall we do about the poor old woman: I cannot endure to abandon her to her evil

fate? Here is Rectzizi; pray be discreet, dear nurse, or there may be mischief."

"Oh bless your sweet face," exclaimed Michael's wife; "it's well worth fighting for, or may I never see Baron Frederick again!"

Phedora did not hear this apostrophe, for she had hastily run to meet Cassimir; but could not prevent Whempski from divulging that they had had another visitor from the fort, nor the still more displeasing intelligence, that he came to lure away the good girl Heaven had sent to comfort her.

"He offered me a heap of dollars," said the old prattler, "as if silver could buy kindness: it buys ill-will fast enough, that I know, but it never buys kindness but when it is given in charity to those that want, and then you must wait till you get to Heaven for what you buy."

"Who was this villain?" cried Rectzizi, in a passionate accent.

"Have

“Have patience—be calm,” said Phedora: “I will remove to some distance with nurse,” continued she, taking him aside;—“but ah! do not precipitate yourself into a situation dangerous to you, and fatal perhaps, to the interests of the dear prisoners.”

“When will you remove, Phedora,” returned he; “it cannot be too soon: I do not answer for myself, whilst you remain exposed to these insults.”

“I will go to morrow morning,” cried she, “somewhere—any where, provided you will promise not to involve yourself in a quarrel on my account. Oh what would the Countess say to me—think of me—were I to be the cause of misery to her, through a son she loves so well.”

“Dry up those tears, my beloved Phedora,” said Rectzizi; “dismiss your fears: I will go this evening to Pirna, and if it contains any kind of carriage, bring one for you early in the morning. I shall be satisfied when you are at Pirna, for there I will guard you myself—there we will wait the release of

those dear beings we are compelled to leave at Konigstein, whose peace and safety I respect too much to engage in any dispute to which I am not highly provoked—but I repeat, that you must leave this place directly.”

“ But this poor old Whempski,” said Phedora.

“ I perceive that you are interested in her behalf,” said Rectzizi, smiling ; “ and her uncouth attachment to my lovely Rubenski ensures her my friendship : you shall send for her to Pirna, and when the good Baroness arrives here, and my mother is at liberty, they will fix upon some plan to induce her to part with you, without a too violent regret.”

The unconscious object of this little arrangement now called to Phedora, who attended her with alacrity ; and Cassimir, whom she began to view in a light less objectionable than the generality of mankind, endeavoured to lessen her prejudices with respect at least to himself individually.

In

In a short time, Michael's wife brought in the dinner, not very sumptuous in itself, nor delicately served up; but every one appeared satisfied with their fare, and nurse as busy and important as though she had been first cook to the Elector. When the simple meal was ended, Rectzizi started up, and whispered to Phedora that he would go immediately to Pirna, and prepare for her residence there.

"Be ready, my sweet Rubenski," added he, "by a little after day-break, and engage dame Stabinsk to attend you."

He then bade her adieu, and Phedora watched at the cottage door until he was out of sight. The afternoon was passed by the old woman in a state of perfect tranquillity; for no man appeared to interrupt the generous attentions of her young companion, and poor Whempski began to triumph in the hope that her eloquence had driven them all from pursuing their wicked plans.

Phedora, to avoid some hours of lamentation, reproach, and contention, deferred the intelligence of her approaching departure till the morning; but secretly commissioned nurse to procure some one from the nearest village to take care of their old hostess in their absence. They wondered much that Michael had not stolen to them, after his unsuccessful attempt to see them, and Phedora waited his appearance with anxious impatience, even beyond the hour when she supposed the castle gates must be closed for the night: she then withdrew to her repose, rather alarmed at his unusual length of absence.

At break of day she rose, and waking nurse, that she might collect together her own little baggage, slept with reluctant slowness to the old woman, to inform her of her removal: the news was softened however, by the motive assigned for it, that of flying from the danger of being known to the officers of the fort: and when Phedora solemnly promised

mised to send for her to her new place of residence, which she did not yet chuse to entrust to her, poor Whempski was much appeased.

About an hour after this explanation, Cassimir came to the cottage door in a sort of open chaise, constructed with wonderful clumsiness, and extremely old and crazy : it was the best—indeed the only one he could procure, and he told Phedora he meant to accompany it on foot back to Pirna, whither he hoped it would carry her in safety, in spite of appearances.

Whilst they awaited the arrival of the woman whom nurse had engaged to attend their old hostess, Phedora procured Reetzzi some breakfast, and congratulated herself that the poor anxious creature would not rise in time to behold him, as all her alarms would have been excited on discovering that she was attended by him in her retreat.—  
The sun now illumined the most projecting  
parts



parts of the rock, and tinged the casement windows of the castle with a variety of brilliant colours. Cassimir became uneasy at the delay of their journey, and Phedora participated in his inquietude more seriously than he was aware of: Michael's wife fretted, and ran every two minutes to a little eminence that arose to an even height with the cottage roof, that she might examine the glen through which the woman must necessarily pass.

At length, "Here she comes!" cried nurse; "save her! she has a pound weight to each foot surely, that she don't walk a little quicker!"

"Lead the chaise round that turning," good Rectzizi," said Phedora; "for if she sees it, and tells the old woman, I shall be accused of having deceived her, and she will think I never mean to return; because she supposes that I am only going to some village a little farther from the fort."

He

He complied with the utmost good-humour, smiling however, at the importance annexed to Whempski's suspicions: and Phedora re-entered the cottage once more, to bid her old hostess farewell. On returning to the door, she beheld, within twenty paces of it, a party of soldiers, and not doubting the intention of their coming, she flew in an agony to nurse, who was in the back part of the dwelling, gathering up her packages.

“ Oh hide me,” exclaimed Phedora, “ they are coming to take me to the fort !”

“ The good woman, turning extremely pale, called out, “ The fairs forbid !”

Reetzizi now rushed in, and forcibly shutting the door against those who followed, “ I have only time to conjure you, my beloved Phedora,” cried he in a low voice, “ to fly to Pirna—to fly immediately if you would relieve me from the most tormenting anxiety. My servant is there; would to Heaven I had brought him.”

The door was now burst open, in spite of his efforts, and Phedora had just perception enough to discover, that instead of her, Rectzizi was seized by the soldiers, who delivered his sword to their officer. He remonstrated warmly, but in vain, against this indignity, which was the more severely felt, as the person in whose possession it was given was Langhorts himself, who ordered his men to conduct their prisoner to the fort without delay.

Phedora, though scarcely able to support herself, advanced at this tremendous command with faltering steps, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Take me too!"

"If you wish," cried Rectzizi, in the Russian language, "to console me for being thus torn from you by that villain, you will solemnly promise to go instantly where I mentioned, and commit yourself for the present to the care of my servant."

"I do promise," returned she, in the same language.

"To

“To go without delay,” rejoined Rectzizi, struggling against the rough efforts of the soldiers to draw him away; “to go the moment we are out of sight.”

“Yes, yes,” returned Phedora, “as you desire it so earnestly, I will.”

He could scarcely hear the assent, from the imperious voice of Langhorts, purposely raised to drown her answer, which, being in the same language Rectzizi had used, he could not himself understand. The Lieutenant would willingly have pained his rival by remaining at the cottage, but his duty compelled him to accompany the prisoner, who now submitted to his fate with tolerable philosophy.

Phedora uttered a passionate lamentation as he ascended the hill, and her tears dropped unheeded and unfelt: the woman whom nurse had hired, compassionated her distress:

“Blessed Mary!” cried she, “if I had known last night who they were seeking for,

I would have come and told you—they have been about this morning too, at our village and the next ever since day-dawn.—Who would have thought they were looking out for that gentleman who was so quiet and harmless !”

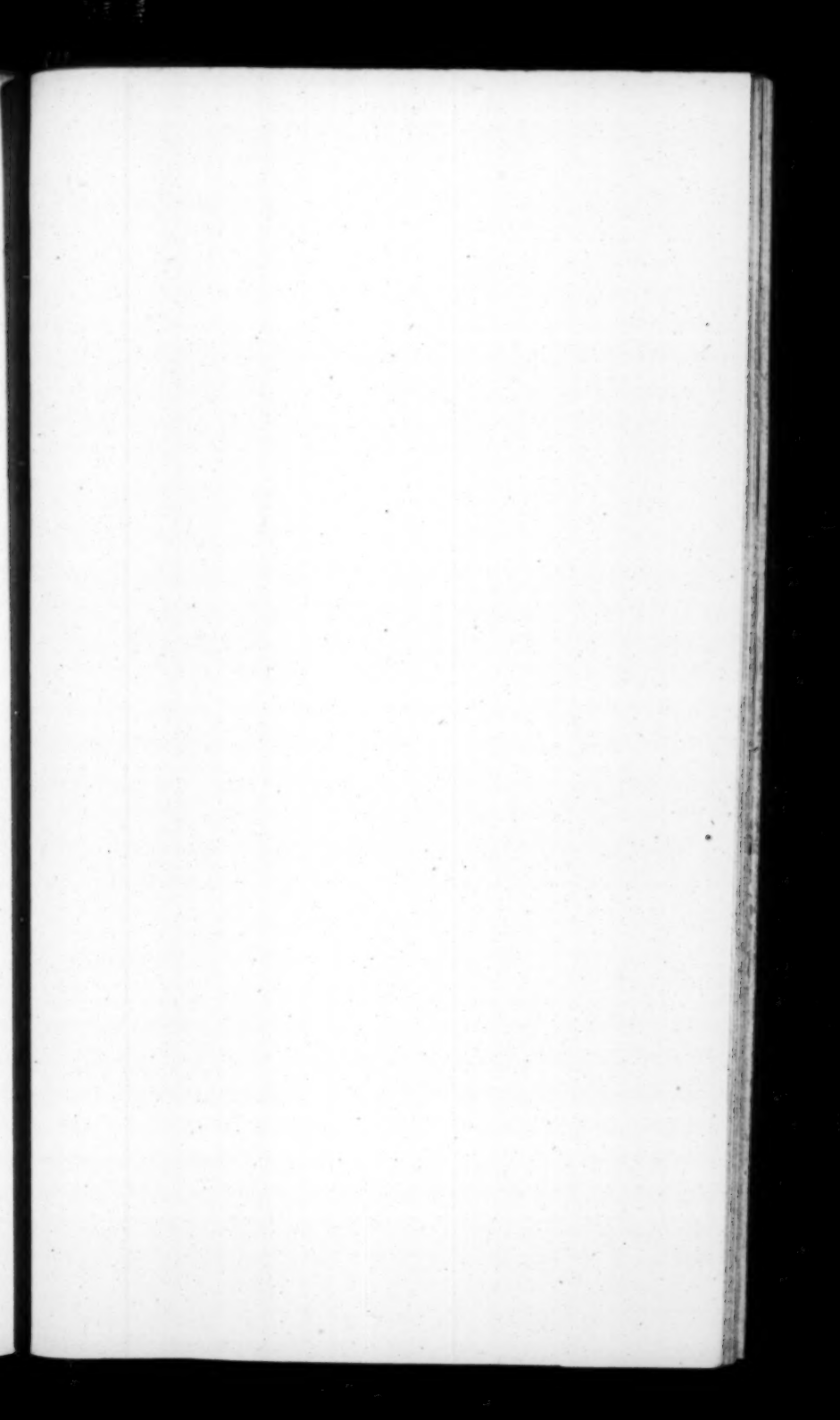
Their hosts now called out most vehemently, not indeed for the first time, for during the uproar, she had equally exerted herself, though to no purpose.

“ There is old Whempski hollowing,” continued the woman ; “ I’ll step and see what she wants.”

“ Let us instantly be gone, good nurse,” said Phedora ; “ my own fears now urge my departure almost as forcibly as the entreaty of Rectzizi.”

“ Ay, surely we will go,” replied nurse ; “ but who is to lead the chaise and manage the horse ; I don’t think that I can.”

This



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Baroness, and it put her in mind of those happy days. Phedora half smiled at her simplicity, and would have rallied her upon her exaltation, had not her spirits been depressed by the unexpected captivity of Casimir. When the intervening mountains had utterly excluded every part of the fortress from her view, she fixed her eyes upon the path before her, without once raising them to give a passing look at the wild scene that encompassed her. The peasant appeared, from natural stupidity, equally uninterested in it, and only nurse now and then exclaimed, "Jesus!" as they passed under a projecting rock, "I hope it won't fall upon its nose till we get away."

At length the good woman enquired of Phedora if she were not weary; for she had then followed the carriage a considerable way without recollecting to re-ascend it. She started at the question, and looking up, beheld a double range of mountains cloathed in a thick foliage; a river murmuring over

a rocky surface adjoined the road they were in, and bent to all its windings as far as the eye could catch them.

“ Is this the way to Pirna ?” asked Phedora ; “ surely not : I have no remembrance of this spot.”

“ Nor I,” cried nurse ; “ but I have not a head to carry every turn and corner I was ever in, so I thought I might forget a little.”

“ Are you sure,” resumed Phedora, addressing their guide, “ that this will lead to Pirna ?”

“ I have been there before now,” replied he, in an accent half sulky and half stupid. She merely observed, that his answer seemed to assent to her enquiry, and then sunk again into a reverie, from which she was awakened in about an hour, by the stopping of the chaise.

“ Are we almost at Pirna ?” said Phedora.

“ I don’t know,” returned the peasant.

“ Why do you not go on ?”

“ I am tired, and so is the poor beast ; I can’t make him move.”

“ Surely,”

"Surely," exclaimed she, "we ought to have been at Pirna long before this time—It is past noon!"

"I have lost my way," replied the man, without the least discomposure.

"Jesu!" cried nurse.

"Why did you not tell us so," said Phedora, "the moment you discovered your mistake? If I had observed with attention the road you took—but it is now too late—where does this lead to?"

"Don't you see," said the phlegmatic peasant, "that we can't go any further for that mountain, that almost tumbles into the river? We must go back again."

"Let us then," cried Phedora, "hasten from this wild place."

"The horse must rest first," answered the man, proceeding deliberately to take him from the chaise.

"Stay a moment," exclaimed Michael's wife; "let us get out."

He

He now perceived the expediency of this, and condescended to grant the request: his next care was to lead the animal to the brink of the stream; and having suffered it to drink, he tethered it in a little spot luxuriantly verdant. Nurse felt rather indignant that his whole attention should be directed to the horse, whilst not one regret appeared to occupy him for the situation in which his carelessness had placed Phedora and herself: she had breakfasted at an earlier hour than usual, and her dinner time was past, so that she found herself extremely hungry: but observing that her young companion did not complain, she made it a point of honour not to be the first to murmur at this circumstance.

The peasant, heartily tired, threw himself on the grass, and sunk into a forgetfulness as profound as the stillness that reigned around the place chance had conducted him to: a stillness, interrupted only by the lightest zephyrs of summer, whispering in the overhanging

hanging foliage, and at intervals by the motions of the poor horse, who, delighted with his pasture, shook his lank sides, and rattled the wretched harness that hung about him.

Phedora was assailed by a momentary idea that their guide had not brought them to a place so abandoned as it appeared to be, without a sinister design ; but her candour instantly repelled it ; nor indeed did any part of his conduct evince any thing more criminal than a natural furlyness of temper, joined to the most stupid imbecility of mind.

Michael's wife, wearied by her own efforts to still the calls of hunger from motives of complaisance, followed the example of the peasant, and resigned herself to repose :— whilst Phedora, without losing sight of her sleeping companions, attempted to ascend the rough surface of one of the mountains that encompassed them, and having, with difficulty, climbed half way, she found a resting place, and ventured to turn her head

to the glen beneath. Nurse, their guide, and the horse, were all diminished to a span long; and the stream that flowed at the foot of the eminence, seemed a rivulet the most dainty Polish dame might have stepped over.

Phedora found her head grow giddy as she contemplated this fairy scene, and hastily placed her hands before her eyes, where she kept them some time before she recovered from the panic that had seized her; yet, as she was not actuated merely by the idle inclination of gaining the summit of the mountain for the honour of the exploit, but by the more rational idea of discovering some town or village to which she might direct the steps of the peasant, she resolved to persevere, and not without trembling as she advanced at the boldness of the enterprize, accomplished her adventurous purpose. She cast her eyes with eagerness over the landscape she had gained, and saw, with inexpressible delight, a village not half a mile  
5 from

from her, almost hidden from her view by the abrupt rising of the ground on which she stood : transported at this desirable object, she hastened to it, in the hope of gaining the intelligence she so much wished. At the entrance of the place, some boors, who were at work, stared at her as she approached ; and having satisfied a momentary and instinctive curiosity, resumed their occupations : in vain did her voice, tuned to harmony, strike upon their undistinguishing ears ; they either would not, or were incapable of giving her any information ; nor was her success greater in the interior of the village, till at length she observed a lively looking girl about twelve years of age, whose features were intelligent and expressive, and promised at least a rational reply to her questions. Phedora led her to the place that overlooked the valley, and made her understand that she desired to be conducted to it by a gentler descent. The little Saxon instantly led the way to it, and after a circuit of a mile, Phedora re-entered the glen : she



found Michael's wife weeping bitterly, and the peasant sitting upon the ground with his elbows resting on his knees, and his hands against his cheeks, staring vacantly at the distress of his companion.

"Be comforted, good nurse," cried Phedora, running up to her, "I did not mean to desert you quite : this sweet girl will show you to the village, and there perhaps we may learn which road to take, without wandering further."

The poor woman started up at this information, with a countenance entirely altered.

"And perhaps too," said she, "we could get a draught of milk and a bit of bread there—which is the way, child?"

The little guide would not however second her impatience, for she was unwilling to quit the side of Phedora, whose gentleness and  
beauty

beauty had wholly won her heart. The peasant fastened the horse to the chaise, and followed the party, which soon arrived at the village, and the inhabitants again quitted their labour to gaze at the equipage. Their countryman, urged by Phedora to make the proper enquiries, obtained, with a little difficulty, the information she had pleaded for in vain: but she took care to make herself acquainted with the directions the people gave, that the stupidity of their Konigstein guide might not occasion them to pass the night amidst the mountains.

The good-humoured alacrity of the little girl she rewarded with a piece of money, and many grateful caresses, and having procured some refreshment, she hurried away her clownish escort, who did not seem inclined to leave his fellow boors quite so soon as she thought necessary. Nurse again mounted into the chaise, and Phedora, determined no longer to give way to reveries,

Q 3

walked

walked by the side of it, carefully marking the way they were to pass.

It was very near sun-set when the town of Pirna appeared in view, and satisfied that she could not now miss it, she gave way to the extreme weariness that oppressed her, and seated herself by the side of nurse. In about ten minutes after, they were accosted by a young man, who enquired, with some earnestness, for Captain Rectzizi: This question, so entirely unexpected, powerfully affected the feelings of Phedora, who was nearly exhausted with fatigue and anxiety, and she burst into tears: the stranger seemed shocked, repeating his question however, with an air of still greater interest.

"Captain Rectzizi is perfectly well," cried she, struggling with her emotion, to prevent a reply Michael's wife had opened her mouth to make: "he is well in health, but he cannot reach Pirna to-day."

The

The man now appeared to recollect himself, and assuming an air of greater respect, undertook to conduct the chaise, saying, he was the servant of Captain Rectzizi, and would lead it to the lodgings his master had provided for the lady. Phedora almost smiled at the appellation, but assented in silence to the proposal, and in a short time found herself in a pleasant little habitation on the Bohemian side of Pirna.

She then informed the young man, of Casimir's detention at the castle of Konigstein; and though she could not prevent her tears from flowing whilst she related the arrest, she mentioned her hopes of his speedy release, through the means of a friend already acquainted with the situation of his family. The concern which the servant displayed upon the occasion, and the assiduous respect with which he treated her, were infinitely consoling to Phedora, who had dreaded the construction he might have put upon her motives for thus throwing herself into the

protection of his master. In his presence, she entreated nurse to be careful of concealing all that related to the transaction, as much she said, depended upon her silence: by this means she hoped to engage the discretion of the young man, without appearing officiously to direct him, or revealing too much of her own situation.

Early the next morning the Konigstein peasant returned to his own village: before he left Pirna, Phedora put a dollar into his hand, and conjured him, if he should be questioned, not to name the place to which he had conducted her. The moment she made the request, she felt that it was an imprudent one, as this extreme caution alone might excite the curiosity of the man: fortunately however, it was a quality he did not in the least possess, but gazing with open-mouthed delight at the silver, he marched off without any idea, except that of promised satisfaction and happiness at the acquisition of such a treasure. Phedora would have added a message

sage to old Whempski, but besides that she doubted the strength of his memory, she was fearful of discovering her residence, by indulging this inclination. She was sensible the Lieutenant would not scruple to exercise the same power over her he had so maliciously employed against Rectzizi; and so great was her terror of him, that she would not quit the most retired part of the house, or permit any stranger to see her, lest himself, or any of his emissaries, should trace her out and seize her: yet she languished to obtain some information from the castle, and on the second day of her residence at Pirna, she employed Bertaw, the servant of Rectzizi, to go to Konigstein, who was carefully to conceal his knowledge of the noble prisoners, and endeavour to gain some intelligence of them, by lingering near the cottage of the old woman, which she accurately described to him, in the hope of meeting with Stabinsk, whose person and mien she likewise depicted, but cautioned him against too hastily accosting any soldier, or giving a too early intimation

of his business. She conjured him too, not to suffer his steps to wander too near the fort, as she was well convinced the suspicions and researches of Langhorts would lead him to watch the motions of any stranger he encountered.

In the absence of Bertaw, she experienced the varied agitations of fear, hope, and uncertainty: she scarcely supposed that he would return the same evening, yet she felt disappointed when it closed in without bringing him back.

The night was passed without sleep; and nurse, who found herself interested in the account the missionary would probably be able to give of her husband, run out at sunrise to meet him on his way home. She came back however, disappointed, and renewed her walk after breakfast with as little success.—Phedora now began most seriously to dread, that Bertaw had, by some imprudence, procured himself a lodging at the castle, and she  
accused



accused herself as the cause of this apprehended misfortune: her fancy immediately busied itself in producing tormenting images, and her recollection assisted her in rendering them but too probable. She imagined that Rectzizi might perhaps have thought proper, on his arrival at the fort, to have produced the order he had procured from the governor of Dresden, and in that case he must continue to use the appellation of Lumerski, whilst Bertaw, artfully questioned, might, on the other hand, reveal his real name and quality. The most horrible fears succeeded this apprehension, from which she was only relieved by the appearance of the servant at the close of day.

She could not then utter the questions that hovered on her lips, but almost breathless with impatience, waited the communication her expressive countenance demanded. Bertaw informed her, that he had been obliged to wait thus long, or he must have returned without seeing Stabinsk.

Q 6

“ Well,”

"Well," interrupted nurse, "how is he? poor Michael!"

"I was near the castle all the day yesterday," continued he, disregarding her question; "but as Stabinsk could not guess this, he did not come to the cottage: I slept at a hut about half a mile from it, and returned at day-break to watch who should come down from the fort; and near two hours after sun-rise, I saw a soldier stealing along the path, and thought it must be Stabinsk by the caution he used, for he looked every other minute behind him.

'Comrade,' says I, accosting him as he was entering the cottage, 'is that Konigstein?'

"He answered that it was. I looked at him attentively as he spoke, and thought he was so like the description I had received, that I called him by his name. He started at that.

'Where do you come from?' cried he.

"I told him to guess.

'From Pirna,' said he directly, 'and your master is missing.'

"I

“I was afraid to trust him quite yet, and only told him, that I had a message from his wife.

‘From my wife!’ cried he; ‘has she not a young woman with her?’

‘Before I give the message,’ said I, ‘tell me if you are really Michael Stabinsk?’—  
‘and tell me too,’ replied he, ‘do you know this?—It was my master’s purse.’

‘It is not mine,’ said I; ‘but I think there is a ring in it.’

‘No,’ said Stabinsk, ‘the ring is taken out—you are Captain Rectzizi’s servant, and I am the man you take me for. Now tell me, is not the young lady with my wife?’

“I satisfied him, and then he informed me, that a friend of his, a foldier in the same corps, had spoke to my master, who was very uneasy to know if the young lady had gone from the cottage; and he gave him his purse to deliver to Stabinsk for her use, having first taken out a ring, and given the man two dollars for his service”

‘Why did Captain Rectzizi do this?’ interrupted Phedora; ‘he must think the  
Baroness

Baroness would not leave me here without providing for my support ; you must return the purse, good Bertaw ; perhaps he may want it himself.'

Bertaw added, that he had entirely satisfied the anxiety of Stabinsk, who was delighted with the prospect of calming the uneasiness of Captain Rectzizi, with the intelligence of the safety of the young lady : but he said that the Lieutenant was much enraged that she had disappeared ; he had searched every village round the place to recover her, and suspecting that Stabinsk had directed her escape, he was very rigorous with him.

" Ah ! poor Michael," cried Phedora, " what can I do to recompense your faithful honesty !"

" It's all done," said nurse, wiping off a tear ; " did not you save Baron Frederick, and bring him to his mother ? It's reward enough to think of that."

Phedora, now thanking Bertaw for his narrative, and refusing to take the offered purse, withdrew with a very pensive mien.

CHAP.

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C H A P. VIII.

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- “ Stern rugged nurse ! thy rigid lore,  
“ With patience many a year she bore :  
“ What sorrow was, thou bad’st her know,  
“ And from her own, she learn’d to melt at other’s woe.”

- “ But seasons now,  
“ As ceaseless round this jarring world they roll,  
“ Still find her happy ; and consenting spring  
“ Sheds her own rosy garland on her head.”

RECTZIZI'S servant had been more than once stimulated by curiosity to enquire how far nurse was acquainted with the history of the young lady she attended ; he had but lately entered into the service of his master, who had distinguished him for his intelligence and honesty, taken him from the ranks of his own company, and upon some particular act of fidelity, had procured his discharge. The account however, which nurse gave of the fair Rubenski, far from being satisfactory, only veiled her origin in the most complete obscurity,

obscurity, by making her start out of the forest of Minski her supposed cradle, with the idolized Baron Frederick in her hand. But though the enquiries of Bertaw were thus checked, his attentions were equally uniform and respectful, as he found by the casual hints nurse unconsciously let fall, of Phedora's visit to the castle where the Count and Countess were confined, that she was known to them, and was likewise a great favourite with the Baroness Hartfen.

Phedora felt uneasy at the too generous precaution of Rectzizi, in depriving himself of the contents of his purse, which she much wished to send back to him, lest he should lose any opportunity of purchasing little attentions and kindness from his guards from the want of it: but she restrained her impatience; that she might not excite suspicion at the fort, by exhibiting the figure of Bertaw again so immediately, to any emissary Langhortz might possibly have near the cottage, or in the neighbouring village. On

the third day however, from his first journey, he himself proposed to go and make some enquiry of Stabinsk, and Phedora was unable to deny herself this indulgence.

He sat out as before, at day-break, and she watched the progress of the sun from its eastern rise to the noon-day meridian.

Nurse, having been out to purchase some necessaries, came home almost instantly, in much haste and confusion, abruptly exclaiming, that the people of the castle had found them out. Phedora felt the blood rush impetuously to her heart at these tidings; her head became giddy, and she fell to the ground before poor nurse could assist her:—she recovered however, from the sudden severity of the shock in a few seconds, and beheld the same officer enter the room, whose freedom of conversation at the cottage of old Whempski had so much offended her. He raised her up, apparently alarmed at the pale horror her countenance exhibited, and  
was



was opening his lips to entreat her not to be terrified at his presence, when she prevented him, by beseeching that he would not betray her to the Lieutenant. He then hastened to tell her that he had sought her out by the express desire of his new friend, Captain Rectzizi; and apologised for his former treatment of her, which he said was in consequence of the folly and villainy of Langhertz, and the officious intelligence of a soldier at the fort, who, by some means, had become acquainted with her visits there.

Phedora, half persuaded that what he affirmed was true, and half fearful of treachery, knew not what to reply, yet wished to screen her suspicions from his observation; timidly she enquired how Rectzizi bore his confinement.

“With singular patience, I think,” returned the officer, smiling, “when I contemplate the object from whom he was so unexpectedly separated.”

Phedora

Phedora blushed.—“ I came to Pirna,” continued he, “ to relieve you from your fears of any further exertion of the Lieutenant’s power with respect to yourself; as I am sufficiently acquainted with his conduct to render his plans abortive, if they aim at your confinement. I was originally impelled by curiosity alone, I confess, to observe the young man, said to be the more favoured rival of Langhertz, but I found him a very noble fellow, who much interested my attention; and when he flattered my probity by confiding in me, I was displeased with myself at having offered you an insult by imputations you did not merit: may I hope that you will forgive them, charming Phedora?”

She readily assented, and delivered from the fears that had oppressed her, began to breathe with freedom, and at length ventured to enquire for the Countess and her daughter. They were both in health, he said, and the Count, who had been rather indisposed

indisposed the last two or three days, was now quite recovered. He then renewed his assurances, that she had nothing to fear from the open violence of Langhortz, but advised her not to return to the cottage.

“ I must now hasten back to Konigstein,” added he : “ I shall quite revive our prisoners with the news of your health and safety. If in any difficulty or dilemma you will dispatch a messenger to Major Brandten, I will endeavour to prove his friendship for Rectzizi, and respect for his amiable Phedora.”

The Major then disappeared, leaving her in a state of confusion not unpleasant ; and nurse, who, from the open door had heard the last words, now bolted in with the most impatient curiosity, to learn all that had passed, for she had run away on the intrusion of the terrific being from the fort, to secure her valuables in case of a seizure.

“ Jesus !”

“Jesus!” exclaimed she, “if I had known all, I would not have run away from him so.”

“Where did you meet this worthy man, good nurse?” asked Phedora.

“Here, just by,” replied she; “and the minute I put my eyes upon him I run home; but he was as nimble as I could be for the life of me.”

Phedora saw her eagerness to be told the purport of the stranger’s visit, and related the good fortune of Rectzizi in gaining such a friend: nurse hoped he would please to consider poor Michael too: she said however, that she was mighty glad that the Captain had met with such good hap, for he was a sweet tempered gentleman.

In the evening, Bertaw returned; he had delivered the purse to Stabinsk, who hoped to have an opportunity of giving it himself into the hand of his master. Phedora hoped it too: and now relieved of her apprehensions of being betrayed into the power of  
Langhertz,

Langhartz, she anticipated, with eagerness, the return of the Baron and Baroness Hartfen, and relying upon the affirmation of Major Brandten, indulged herself sometimes with walking, under the protection of Bertaw, on the road that led to Peterfwalda, through which they must pass. Several days however, elapsed, and with all the diligence of Bertaw to catch any equipage travelling towards Bohemia, no news either of or from the Hartfens reached her.

She began to feel much alarmed at this long silence, when one day, on returning from her fruitless ramble, nurse run out to meet her, exclaiming, " They are come ! They are come ! "

" Which way—where are they ? " cried Phedora, darting into the house ; and beholding Cassimir, his father, the Countess, and Ulmeri, instead of those friends she had expected, astonishment and delight deprived her both of voice and motion.

They

They crouded round her with careffes and expreffions of fondnefs; and at length Phedora burft into a paffion of tears, and fell at the feet of the Count and Countefs.

“ Sweet girl !” exclaimed Madame Rectizi, raifing her from the ground; “ you little expect the difcovery that awaits you, with all this gentle humility ! Do you know that the Baronefs and your friend Catherine, nay even the good Mr. Leuhaupt, will no longer recognise their Phedora Rubenski ?” She started.—“ But in future their little favourite will be Phedora Countefs Czerskowi.”

“ I too,” cried Caffimir, “ have renounced my lovely Rubenski—I follow the example of our friends, and devote myfelf to Phedora Czerskowi.”

“ Ah, my mother !” faid Ulmeri, “ relieve our dear Phedora—fee how her bofom heaves !”

The good Count feconded this request, and the fair orphan then heard from the  
lips

lips of Madame Rectzizi that her venerable grandmother, the reputed Dame Rubenski, had confessed her rank to Mr. and Mrs. Leuhaupt a few hours before she died, with an entreaty never to reveal it to the heiress of her title and her poverty, that she might continue to receive shelter in obscurity from the misfortunes of her house. But when the good man learnt that the happiness of Casimir so wholly depended upon his obtaining her, he resolved to disclose the secret, hoping that a discovery of her high birth would remove the only objection that could be entertained against his union with her; but Mr. Leuhaupt, not having any convincing proof to produce of the truth of what he meant to assert, was not without inquietude for the event, until Phedora, in relating her deliverance by Rubenski, and her residence in his family, with the remarkable impression her countenance made upon old Matheowna, gave the worthy man an opportunity of corroborating his discovery, by the testimony of this poor old creature, who had  
evinced



evinced so tender a predilection for the orphan.

Mr. Leuhaupt prudently resolved however, not to raise the expectations of his young friends, by informing them of plans which might be frustrated by the death of Matheowna, or the removal of the Rubenskis; but neither of these circumstances had happened; and his messenger found their residence as Phedora had described it. The news he carried, that a descendant of Count Czerskowi still existed, endued old Matheowna with resolution and strength to perform the journey to Warsaw: and Mr. Leuhaupt took advantage of the absence of the Baron, to meet her in Luthuania.

Two or three memorials of the rank she once held in life had been entrusted to him by the ever respected Dame Rubenski, and these he had religiously preserved, though of themselves they could testify nothing: in the presence of Baron and Baroness Hartsen they

had been carelessly displayed to old Matheowna, and instantly recognised by her as having belonged to the Countess Czerskowi, whose last confidence to Mr. Leuhaupt, the testimony of this faithful servant confirmed beyond a doubt.

“ I will not, at this moment, my good Phedora,” added Madame Rectzizi, after she had given this explanation in her own words ; “ torment you with a detail of the misfortunes of your noble family : the Baron, it seems, once slightly knew your grandfather, and with the friendly zeal so natural to him, has employed, with a perseverance wholly indefatigable, the same influence that procured our liberty, to remove the cloud hanging over the title of Czerskowi : it revives in you, my excellent child ; and the charming Baroness concludes her narrative, by telling us, that as you restored their little Frederick to the world, the Baron has made it a point of honour to surprise this  
same

same world with our admirable Czerskowi, drawn from the mountains of Konigstein."

She ceased ; but Phedora was unable to reply : she gazed at the Countess with painful earnestness, as though she feared that her senses had deceived her ; and Madame Rectzizi now considerately drew her husband and Cassimir out of the room. Phedora left *tête-à-tête* with Ulmeri, questioned her with a mind yet unconvinced ; and when assured of the truth of that narrative, which still floated on her imagination like a recent dream, she relieved the fullness of her heart in the bosom of her friend.

In a short time the Countess returned to her, and Cassimir insisted upon being admitted too, because he had many remembrances, he said, to convey to her from her Konigstein friends. Amongst these was a very angry message from Mathé's grandmother, who had cried and scolded so feelingly, and mingled in her remonstrances so many la-

mentations for her lost children, that the gentle Ulmeri, who accompanied her brother to the cottage, could not forbear weeping with her.

“ Ah, Madam,” said Phedora, appealing to the Countess, “ will you suffer me once more to go to Konigstein ?”

Madame Rectzizi assented very readily, and told her she was already acquainted with her inclination to render the situation of old Whempski more comfortable. “ The Count,” added she, “ will wait, I believe, at this place, until we have procured the discharge of Stabinsk, whom the Baroness has commissioned us to bring with us to Warsaw, and likewise her son’s nurse, who is, I think, with you.”

Phedora, on hearing this, run to inform nurse of her husband’s good fortune, and the poor woman was frantic with joy at the prospect of being again near the young Baron,  
and

and having her husband delivered from the rigours of the musquet and the bayonet.

“ Oh confound their glittering !” exclaimed she ; “ Michael has toiled oft and hard to keep those foolish things bright, and all for what, I trow !”

The following day was appointed for Phedora to pay her parting visit at the cottage of Konigstein ; and the Countess condescended to suffer the carriage appointed for her use to travel back to the fort, to convey old Whempski to Pirna. Ulmeri, who had desired to be of the party, insisted upon being conducted in the old chaise Cassimir had so gallantly procured for the fair Countess Czerskowi, drawn by the same lean horse, which her brother again undertook to lead. Madame Rectzizi smiled at the frolic-plan of her happy children, and only the consideration of her being then entirely left alone, could have prevented the good Count from joining the party.

“ I have not told my lovely Phedora,” said Cassimir, when he had settled every thing relative to their little journey, “ of the numberless gallant speeches Major Bandten charged me to deliver to her ear.”

“ Neither have you told me,” returned she, blushing, “ by what good fortune you have escaped from the castle : I could not forget that the Baron was unacquainted with your having taken up your abode there.”

“ My liberation was indeed a piece of good fortune,” replied he ; the order for our enlargement was so worded as to include fifty of us, had fifty been immured there, since it mentioned the Count Reetzizi and those of his family detained in the fortress of Konigstein. This delightful order arrived last night at the castle by an estafette, escorted by a small party of horse, and with it the packet of discovery from the amiable Baroness, which gives me,” added he in a whisper, “ new life and hope.”

Early

Early in the morning, Ulmeri and Phedora were ready to ascend the old chaise; Cassimir hailed their appearance with much satisfaction, as he had been walking for some time before the house without being able to gain admittance; for his father and himself had been compelled to sleep elsewhere, from want of lodging room in the dwelling Phedora occupied. Bertaw attended with another horse for fear of accidents, and the carriage of the Countess followed at a small distance.

Ulmeri was charmed with her new mode of travelling; Phedora all gaiety; and Cassimir more pleased with his post than if he had succeeded to the command of the whole Russian army, especially when the lovely Czerskowi descended from her elevated situation, and walked by his side to relieve the poor horse: his sister was then obliged to call to him every other minute, lest, from his complete want of attention, she should be precipitated into a rivulet, or overturned



against a detached piece of rock. To prevent this catastrophe, she at length quitted the chaise, nor would she again enter it without her friend.

Phedora, still in her peasant dress, which she would not discard until she had paid her visit at Konigstein, gave them a history of her journey to Pirna, and inspired both Casimir and his sister with an inclination to behold the mountain she had climbed; the wild and apparently desolate scene that had terrified her, and the sweet little girl who had extricated her from her embarrassment: she easily therefore, made Rectzizi promise to lose his way in coming back, and call at the same village for information,

About two hours before noon, the old chaise arrived at the cottage door, where poor Whempski was seated, but with an air of melancholy she had not worn when Phedora had assisted to place her there.

“ Did

“Did I not tell you, my good mother,” cried Cassimir, “that I would conduct your pretty child to you? See, I have brought you another too, almost as handsome, and a very good girl, who hates the sight of the fort, and would not once steal up that path to visit it, if she lived with you a year.”

The old woman embraced Phedora with much affection; and after many expressions of kindness on both sides, the young Countess Czerskowi undertook to do the honours of the cottage: she run to the rustic larder, and spread its contents before Ulmeri and her brother. During the breakfast of the travellers, Phedora proposed to their hostess to remove to Pirna, where she could be taken proper care of during the winter.

“Your good friend here,” said she, pointing to Rectzizi, “will settle you there; and I think I have found out a little attendant for you, who will supply my place, and chat and sing, and never think of going to the

castle—but perhaps you will not like Pirna, because there is a castle there too.”

“ Aye, aye,” replied the old woman, “ there are enough of them, and chuck full of locusts that prey upon the produce of the land, so I may as well be there as any where.”

Cassimir guessed that the little attendant she spoke of was the sprightly girl immured amidst the mountains, and was pleased with the little plan she had so happily laid. When old Whempski had given her assent to it, he started up to inform his friend Brandten of the visitors who now graced the cottage ; and Ulmeri then drew Phedora towards the recess, where her brother had dined the first day of his appearance at Konigstein. There she enquired, with many blushes, for Ivan Leuhaupt, where he was at that time, if Phedora had lately seen him, if he were further promoted, and a thousand questions the presence of her mother or Cassimir had hitherto prevented. Phedora half smiled and half wept at this proof of still existing attachment,

ment ; and gave her friend, with patient exactness, a detail of all she knew concerning him. The countenance of Ulmeri still however, appeared to require more intelligence, when Cassimir relieved the embarrassment of Phedora, by returning with Major Brandten, who congratulated her very warmly on the liberation of her friends.

“ This gentleman,” said Rectzizi, “ wishes me to introduce the governor of Konigstein to the lovely Countess Czerskowi.”

“ But she has no inclination,” replied Phedora hastily, “ to receive such an honour: she wishes much more to be introduced to Michael Stabinsk.”

“ Ah, my worthy governor,” cried Cassimir, “ you must then be contented to remain Major Brandten !”

Phedora blushed with surprise at this discovery, and the impostor smiled.

"I promise you," said he, "too charming Phedora, that Langhortz is doing penance for his presumption, both from the total annihilation of his hopes, and from my abhorrence of his very ungenerous conduct."

"I hope not," replied she; "for indeed I have quite forgiven him."

"And Major Brandten," said Ulmer timidly, "will follow so sweet an example, I trust."

He assented, with many expressions of admiration at the amiable disposition of Phedora. At this moment Michael Stabinsk appeared; but he started back on discovering that the governor formed one of the groupe: he was immediately recalled however, and told by the redoubtable Major, that he was no longer in the service, and might follow the ladies to Pirna, when they returned thither. The poor fellow received the welcome news with a transport no sense of deference and respect could entirely suppress; and Phedora was much delighted with the acceleration of

this event, which would render his wife and himself so completely happy.

The governor accompanied the party to the cottage, to take leave of the old woman who had rejected his dollars with such honest indignation; and having received another lecture, he bade adieu to Rectzizi, his sister, and Phedora, who followed him half way up the hill, with expressions of gratitude and esteem. Cassimir then reminded the fair friends, that as they must lose their way on going home, it would be necessary to place old Whempski immediately in her carriage, and ascend their own without delay.

Mathé's grandmother exhibited some reluctance on quitting her habitation, which she never thought to leave, she said, till the desertion of her child had made it uncomfortable to her: she stipulated that her chair and her bed, and a few other favourite pieces, should be sent after her; and what yet remained were presented to the woman who  
had

had taken care of her. She found herself uneasy when first she was put into the carriage of the Count, from the unwonted grandeur of her situation; but a few minutes soon reconciled her to the novelty.

Bertaw now led the old chaise, and Casimir rode forward to find out the turning where Phedora's former guide had contrived to miss the road: with some difficulty and ingenuity he discovered it, and returned to resume his first station. Ulmeri would not however, suffer her companion to walk by his side, in order to relieve the poor horse, till they arrived at the foot of the mountain, which, according to the peasant, almost tumbled into the river. Phedora pointed out to them the one she had climbed, which appeared almost perpendicular, and she now gazed at it herself with terror: Rectzizi shuddered, and his sister seemed almost incredulous.

"I



"I will now show you the way to the village," cried the fair Czerfkowi, "and present to you my little girl."

Her friends assented, and on arriving at it, they beheld at the entrance, Phedora's sprightly favourite, with the same engaging smile playing over her countenance. Ulmeri and Cassimir were charmed with her, and at their request the child led them to her parents, who consented with willing indifference, to part with her, scarcely even requiring the place of her future residence: Phedora then carried her off, highly delighted with her prize.

Before the party reached Pirna, Rectzizi contrived to converse with her upon his present happy prospects.

"You can now no longer complain," said he, "that your rank in life is low, my charming Phedora."

"Not

“ Not with the same justice,” returned she ; “ but I believe I am as poor and destitute as when I was the little Rubenski.”

Cassimir was almost angry that she should urge this as an objection to their union : but he informed her of what his mother had forgotten to mention, that the Baron had procured her a considerable pension.

“ I speak of it only,” he added, “ to gratify the generosity of your soul, by giving you the certainty of being able to indulge it : yet you see how little my mother estimated the pecuniary advantage attending the application of the good Baron, since it did not even retain a place in her memory.”

The old chaise regained Pirna before the evening closed in ; and the Count and Countess welcomed the whole party, including Whempski and the little girl, with the utmost good-humour and condescension.—Nurse could scarcely credit her eyes, on beholding

holding Michael so soon released from his trammels, and run to bring him an old coat she had carefully saved from the happy time he was a peasant, that his military garb might no longer offend her sight.

Count Reetzizi and his family remained at Pirna but to fulfil the wishes of Phedora, in establishing poor old Whempski in her new abode : she was very well satisfied with her little companion, who, on her part, was equally pleased at being transferred from the hop-grounds round her sequestered village, to so grand and superb a place as Pirna appeared to her. Reetzizi took the proper measures for their decent maintenance, and appointed a person to superintend the conduct of the little Saxon, and teach her those gentler exercises of female industry to which she was yet an utter stranger.

The liberated pair then departed with their children and the fair Czerskowi for Dresden, with Stabinsk and his wife in their  
suite :

suite : and having rested one night in the magnificent suburbs of this town, they pursued their journey towards Warsaw, where they had the good fortune to arrive before the winter set in.

The Polish capital was still the head quarters of General Hartfen, and Phedora had the happiness of meeting there the Baroness, little Frederick, and the worthy Mr. Leuhaupt, who conducted her to old Matheowna and her deliverer Rubenski. Her father's nurse seemed to acquire new life on beholding once more a Countess Czerskowi; but the strong resemblance Phedora bore to that father suddenly checked her joy, and with a varied emotion of transport and regret, she hung over her fugitive favourite, weeping most bitterly. Ottokesa and her husband were almost equally affected; he had been reared in his infancy in the house of the old Count Czerskowi, and had imbibed for the family, his mother's enthusiastic reverence.

Phedora

Phedora renewed her acquaintance with all the children, and her sweet vivacity soon recalled the familiarity of their former friendship: the Baroness indeed, was more than half jealous in behalf of her beloved Frederick, who still retained his original fondness for his first companion.

Ulmeri was disappointed in not finding Catherine at Warsaw: and to still her lamentations, as well as those of Phedora, the Baroness wrote to her husband, that he must immediately give Lumerski leave of absence, that he might accompany his wife thither, to be present at the nuptials of the fair Czerskowi.

This letter not only procured Phedora the company of Catherine and Lumerski, but brought the Baron himself to Warsaw, who was extremely anxious not to be absent on this occasion: and when Phedora embraced him with an effusion of gratitude for his zeal  
in

in her service, he eagerly demanded when the ceremony was to be performed.

“ We have waited for your presence, my good friend,” said the Count Rectzizi, “ before we have presumed to conclude upon any point relating to your ward, for such we now regard our Phedora. It was with difficulty my son Cassimir has been persuaded by his mother and myself to consent to this delay, but we are very certain you will now reward his forbearance.”

“ Come, my fair ward,” cried the Baron joyously, “ let us instantly fulfil this expectation !”

He then presented her hand to Cassimir, who was infinitely charmed with this method of procedure ; and in a few days every circumstance was adjusted preparatory to the union with his beloved Phedora. Catherine and Lumerski partook very amply of their happiness, and the vivacity of the Baroness enlivened every countenance with a double portion

portion of gaiety. Ulmeri indeed sighed now and then at the recollection of the absent Ivan : but his father, his sister, and the fair Czerskowi, were thankful that he was spared a sight so mortifying as the attainment of that hand by another, which he had so long and vainly aspired to gain.

Catherine, who was not yet acquainted with the tender partiality Ulmeri secretly nourished for her brother, received her advances to a mutual intercourse of friendship, as an honour that much flattered her, and which, from the amiable disposition of the young Pole, she caught at with avidity.

The marriage of Cassimir and Phedora now only waited the arrival of his brother, whose presence the Countess particularly desired upon the occasion. Restzizi loudly murmured at this piece of family punctillio ; the Baron drew up his shoulders ; and his lady congratulated little Frederick with an arch smile, upon his deficiency of elder brothers :



thers : but neither hint, remonstrance, or inuendo, had the desired effect.

Phedora, in this interval, often and vainly asked of Mr. Leuhaupt and the Baroness some intelligence respecting the misfortunes of her family, unusually severe as they must have been, to have reduced her grandmother and her father to a situation so obscure and totally abandoned as that in which they lived after they had taken refuge in Livonia.— But they were unwilling to damp her present happiness, and the approaching moment of festivity by a relation which could not fail to steal away the smiles that dimpled on her cheek, and drown the lustre of her eye in tears. Phedora felt, however, too much interested in the mournful events they endeavoured to withhold from her knowledge, to acquiesce in the ignorance her friends with the kindest intention, wished her to retain of them ; and one day, when she found Matheowna alone, she made use of the influence she

she had acquired over her, to obtain all the intelligence their faithful old domestic could give.

“About the time your dear father was born,” said the poor creature with a sigh, “there happened great disturbances in Poland (God help us, we staid a few years there, and then went to Russia to be out of the way, when we found the Count was dead, and the blessed Countess, your grandmother, hid herself with your father, the sweetest child that ever opened his eyes on this world). There was our king Uladislaus,\* he honoured your grandfather, who went with him to the wars, and fought the Russians, and saved the King’s life before Moscow, they say. When he came back he married the Countess: and some years after the King died, and his brother came to the throne; and your grandfather fought for him too, and there were great disturbances again; and in the

\* Uladislaus penetrated into Russia, and took the capital, Moscow.

the midst of them King John\* lost our poor country to the cruel Swedes; and there was your grandmother the good Countess left here in Warsaw with four of her children—your father was not born then.

‘What became of these four children?’ interrupted Phedora eagerly.

“Ah! Heaven be with them,” cried Matheowna, “I shall tell you soon enough! I was but a young thing then, and just got into the family—Well, the place was beset, and, to save the baby at her breast, the poor Countess made her escape, and the other three children fell into the hands of the Swedes. Oh it was bitter indeed! Then when the baby was safe, the Countess would have gone back to the others, but it was too late. She went at last into Germany, to find the Count her husband; but he was gone with a heap of fighting men to meet the King; and at last they sent away the Swedes, and the Count’s two sons and their sister, who had been taken prisoners at Warsaw,

\* John Cassimir.

Warsaw, were restored to their mother.— But the young Lady had grieved so much, that she died soon after : she was the only daughter the good Countess ever had. We had not been long at peace before fresh tumults began : I was then married, but the Countess still kept me in the family, and your dear father, coming into the world just then, I got to be his nurse. It was a sad time ! The good Count and his eldest son, a fine youth about eighteen, were in a party to keep King John\* upon the throne ; but his enemies were too powerful, so he went to France, they say, and all those that wished him well were badly off indeed !— Your grandfather did not at all like this sending one away, and setting up another ; and the Countess was very unhappy, I found out, about him and her sons.

“ But now came on the worst : for wars broke out again yonder in Podolia, and the  
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\* John Cassimir, being deposed, retired into France, and became Abbot of St. Germain's.

Count's two sons, that were both grown up youths, went there. And then some tussle happened—I know not what, not I; and the Countess went down upon her knees, and cried to her husband, to make him go away somewhere, that his enemies might not find him: and at last he went; but he had not been gone a month before his two sons in Podolia were put into prison, and afterwards killed. People said they were innocent, but these were sad suspicious times!—Then, whilst the Countess lay ill with this sad news, her third son, quite a stripling, was taken from her. This drove her almost to distraction, but she directly sent away your dear father (sweet child!) and got up from her bed, and in the dead of night followed him, we could not tell where. Dear lady! I thought her wild the day before; for her eyes struck fire only to look on them, but her face was pale and hollow. She said they would murder her boy Uladislaus, and so I believe they did: but thank Heaven the darling young Count John was saved.

“ The

“ The next day the house was filled with foldiers ; but my husband had taken me away—the more was our luck, for some of the servants were put into prison : and for four years I never heard of the good Countess : I thought her dead, and often lamented for her, and the Count, and the young gentlemen, and my own little Czerskowi, that sucked at this breast ; when one day my husband brought in a person dressed as poorly as I was ; she held a sweet boy by the hand, about ten years old : I looked at them both—it was the Countess herself, and my darling babe, the young Count ! Dear child, he was now fatherless. The good Countess did not dare to stay in Warsaw : she left it the same day ; but all her effects were gone. Alas ! we were poor, yet we pressed her to accept all we had to offer—on our knees too, and she would not. Ah ! my sweet young Countess, she embraced her poor old servant, and took away her son, and my eyes were never after blessed with the sight of them.—My husband died, to add to my affliction,

and my son Rubenski carried me with him to Luthuania, and then to Russia; and surely God himself must have directed his steps, to save the life of my own Count Czerskowi's daughter."

Phedora had covered her face with her hands during the greater part of this imperfect narrative: she sighed for the fate of those of her family, whom she had never known; but the sufferings of her beloved grandmother through a long life, marked with a series of calamities, her patience, her humility, her piety, and gentle resignation, all pressed upon her recollection, and weighed down her soul with a tide of fond regret.

Old Matheowna was alarmed at her convulsive sobs, and vainly endeavoured to soothe her grief. At this instant Rectzizi, who had missed his Phedora, and had been at the house of Mrs. Lumerski to seek her, entered the little habitation the Baroness had procured for the family of Rubenski, and was  
terrified



terrified at the situation in which he discovered her. He instantly suspected what had passed, and could not restrain his anger against poor Matheowna, whose imprudence and unthinking folly he vehemently reprobated. Phedora was much hurt at the blame her importunity alone had brought upon the good old creature: she struggled to regain her speech, and insensibly cast off the acuteness of her anguish in her eagerness to defend her. Forgiveness was then exchanged on either side, and serenity restored: but Phedora often dwelt in private on the melancholy sketch she had extorted from the ancient domestic of her grandmother, whose last years, so replete with modest and unobtrusive heroism, filled her mind with reverence and admiration.

She could not refrain from asking of Mr. Leubaupt some information respecting her mother, and learnt from him, that the late Countess Czerskowi had declared her to be the daughter of a Russian Boyard, who had

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been

been banished with his family to Siberia ;— but the wife dying during the journey, her infant daughter had been left at a village to be suckled ; and was brought up by the charity of a Russ family of some distinction. The young Count met with her at a very early age at Moscow, where he was soliciting to be employed in the service of the Czar ; but as his education had not been in the military line, and he had not experience or superior knowledge to recommend him to the great legislator of this rising empire, his petition was not attended to ; and the fair Russ could not prevail upon herself to add a mortification of a more tender kind to the severe one he had already received : she consented to unite her hapless destiny to his, and he retired with her and his mother to Livonia : but unable to behold the helpless poverty of those he loved so fondly, in a fit of youthful impatience he joined the troops, under the command of Patkul, and fell in the first engagement at which he was present, wholly unknown but as John Rubenski,

benski, the name he had assumed by the advice of the Countess.

This account Phedora drew from the good Leuhaupt with much difficulty; it cost her many tears; but the tender assiduities of Cassimir Rectzizi, at length dried them up.

His brother, on arriving at Warsaw, was not a little astonished to recognise in his intended sister-in-law the Countess Czerkowi, the humble Phedora Rubenski, whom he had treated with so little ceremony: he was extremely provoked that love and destiny had not decreed her for him: but he assisted at the nuptials, to which he was invited, with a very decent semblance of contentment, notwithstanding this instance of the superior good fortune of Cassimir was aggravated by the recent inheritance of his grandfather's estates. For the first time, he now learned the late imprisonment of his family; and enquired with surprise and in-

dignation what had been the pretext for this insult.

“ I was yesterday,” replied Count Restzizi, “ as ignorant of the crime imputed to me as yourself; and the Baron, who obtained my release, could never gain any positive information of the particular jealousy to which I had nearly fallen an unconscious victim. This morning however, in conversing with Prince M——, my offence was unveiled to me. In journeying from Lublin, the compassion of the Countess and Ulmeri was excited by the appearance of a foot traveller, whose countenance and gait betrayed the most painful and excessive weariness; and the anxious efforts he made to advance, were ill seconded by his decayed strength. The Countess stopped our carriage, and offered him money, which he refused. I enquired what we could do to serve him: the man pointed to a horse one of my servants led: ‘ Suffer me,’ returned he, ‘ to ride a few leagues in your suite.’ I consented, imprudently

dently I confess. This person, a known and warm adherent of Stanislaus, was closely pursued, and escaped by the means chance thus presented to him; whilst the assistance we had so incautiously afforded him, without any suspicion of his principles, or knowledge of his conduct, placed us in the situation from which we had preserved him. And my supposed treachery was the more keenly resented, because my professions of attachment to Augustus had ever been zealous and unreserved."

Madame Rectzizi and her daughter readily recollected the circumstance, and the Countess took blame to herself for having been the principal cause of their confinement by urging her husband to comply with the demand of the stranger. "Yet I cannot regret our journey to Konigstein," said she, "since it so indisputably proved the generous affection of our Phedora, and evinced so strikingly the noble integrity and strict

strict honour that governed her sentiments and her actions."

The Countess alluded to her visits and their conversation at the fort ; with which every one present, except her eldest son, were well acquainted. Phedora received this testimony of the high place she occupied in the esteem of her new mother, with gratitude and modest pride ; and though Cassimir felt equally or more gratified by it, he was nevertheless extremely delighted that she had been excused by unforeseen circumstances from acting up to this plan of severe honour, which had threatened to destroy the happiness of both.

The gentle Ulmeri was of a nature too generous to repine at the satisfaction of others ; yet she found herself almost angry with every one about her for appearing gay and contented, and not regretting every moment, as she herself did, the absence of Ivan Leuhaupt. This displeasure was however  
confi-

considerably removed, when the Baron announced his promotion to the good man his father, who received the warm and sincere congratulations of his friends upon this pleasing event; and little Frederic, his pupil, obtained a promise from the Baron, that he should serve his first campaign under Captain Leuhaupt.

“But remember, my good Alexy,” cried Phedora, “if you should then be taken prisoner, you must not pout, or hang your head, or scratch the face of your adversary, which happened you know in the campaign we made together at Minski; because I shall certainly not be at your elbow to screen you from vengeance.”

This retrospective hint brought on a sportive skirmish between Frederic and his fair friend; which ended in a forced promise on her part, never to revive any anecdote which would call his magnanimity in question.

The



The Baron obtaining in his recovered son, a new and most pleasing source of happiness, relinquished those pursuits which had rendered the earlier years of his marriage with his Baroness a cause of disquietude to her. Her vivacity was now not only habitual, but rose from the heart, and delighted all those who were honoured with her friendship. The Baron's former associate, Jalgourouki, when he had forgotten his grief for the supposed death of Phedora, married a Russian lady of high rank; and in spite of the edicts of Peter the Great, she sometimes appeared intoxicated at too early an hour;\* and the prince her husband took the liberty of applying a cane to her shoulders.

The fair Ulmeri continued steadfast in her partiality for Ivan Leuhaupt, who some time after the marriage of Phedora, procured leave of absence to visit his friends in Warsovia.

\* It was a punishable offence for any lady to appear intoxicated before nine in the evening. And it was forbidden that the ladies should be beaten by their husbands with sticks, or lashed with whips.

fovia. He shunned at first the society of Cassimir and his lovely wife ; but at length accepted their overtures of friendship ; and when his heart rebelled against his more reasonable resolves, he soon learned to apply for consolation to the gentle attentions of Ulmeri. Her brother approved her choice ; and when Ivan discovered the affection with which she distinguished him, he was stimulated by the most ardent gratitude, to merit her hand, by raising himself to a rank in the Russian service, that would not disgrace the choice of Count Rectzizi's daughter. General Hartfen with persevering friendship seconded his efforts ; and he waited only to obtain the command of a regiment, before he ventured to ask his faithful Ulmeri of her parents.

Lumeriski and his wife lived together in the most perfect harmony : and when the good Leuhaupt resigned his pupil into the hands of his military tutors, Catherine prevailed on her husband to quit the army. She  
had

had presented him with an engaging family of children, who formed the delight and happiness of their grandfather; and she now solicited him to end his days amidst them, and under the same roof. The sisterly affection Phedora and herself had mutually imbibed for each other in their early years, was never weakened or interrupted by casual absences or different engagements; and when Livonia was once more blessed with the smile of peace, Cassimir, with his wife, Catherine and Lumerski, visited the village where they first met: it was now a heap of ruins; and Phedora looked in vain for the humble grave of the once distinguished Countess Czerskowi. She was shocked and grieved at her disappointment; and Rectzizi, who participated in the regret, led her reluctantly from the place, to the border of the lake from which he had snatched her. Catherine assisted them in finding out the exact spot where Phedora discovered that her deliverer from an untimely death, and her early benefactor, was the same admired Rectzizi

Reetzizi. He too, was delighted to recall her image, as she had first appeared before him; remonstrating with tears and artless energy against the oppression of the rude band who had despoiled her of her subsistence.

When every thing was performed that pious affection could suggest, to rescue the ashes of the venerable and unfortunate Countess Czerkowski from oblivion, Reetzizi returned with Phedora and the Lumerski's to Lithuania, where it was the will of his grandfather that he should sometimes reside. Having detained his guests there a few months, they all proceeded to Warsaw, now become the central situation of most of their friends.

Whilst Phedora was in Livonia, she was recognized and claimed by her ancient admirer Captain Matheowitz, who was now almost paralysed to a state of infancy by the insidious encroachments of age, and the cruel effects

effects of rye-spirits and French brandy : but as Cassimir contrived to make out a subsisting engagement with his fair wife, previous to her unlucky and mistaken betrothment on board the Petrowna, the veteran condescended to wave his pretensions, with an acknowledgement that she was rather better comforted than if she had set sail in matrimony with him.

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